

A concise guide for everyone



Discover PUERTO VALLARTA



Editorial Mardeki

Discover PUERTO VALLARTA

Marilú Suárez-Murias

DISCOVER. PUERTO VALLARTA

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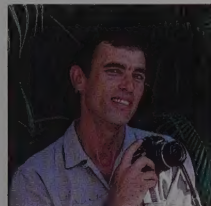
MARILÚ SUÁREZ-MURIAS

Marilú Suárez-Murias was born in Caracas, Venezuela where she lived until she received her B.A. degree in Communications at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello. She moved to Washington, D.C. and worked for the Mexican Tourism Department and graduated with a M.A. degree in Communications Media, from American University. Marilú then traveled throughout the U.S., Hawaii, Mexico and the Caribbean and published articles internationally. After 10 years in the tourist and hotel business, she wrote the Spanish versions of the "Globetrotter Guides" to *California* and *México*. Marilú first came to Vallarta in 1989 for three months. In 1996 she authored *The Magic of Puerto Vallarta* which beautifully describes and illustrates why she still lives here with her husband, Dean, her dog Kichu, and soon her first child.



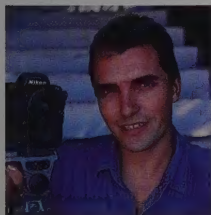
JOHN WELZENBACH

John Welzenbach was born in Port Huron, Michigan and began taking his first photos when he was three years old. While he was studying law, he decided that his real love was photography. Today he is considered one of the top advertising and location photographers in the United States. He is the national spokesman for Kodak's digital photography products. Among his clients are such corporate giants as American Express, McDonalds, Wilson Sporting Goods, Budweiser, among others. John first came to Puerto Vallarta in 1986, and since then has been revealing the soul of Vallarta with his images. John lives in Chicago with his wife, Amy, and two children, Becky and Ben. They vacation every year in Vallarta.



MARK CALLANAN

Mark Callanan was born in Melbourne, Australia. He graduated from Macquarie University, Sydney, in 1981 with a Bachelor of Science degree. He worked professionally for various research institutions on the flora and fauna within the semi-arid zones of the country's interior. Later, as a volunteer for the Australian Museum doing surveys of humpback whale migrations, he got his first taste of life at sea. He enjoyed it so much that he spent the next 5 years circumnavigating the globe on a variety of sailboats to 33 countries. On this journey he started to record his travels into words and images—a habit he has since developed, and one that he now pursues professionally from Puerto Vallarta.



DANILO ROTTIGNI

Danilo Rottigni was born in Bergamo, Italy, and grew up amidst a family of photographers. Having toured Europe by motorcycle, where he first began taking pictures, he studied both languages and photography in London, England. He continued travelling throughout the United States, Canada, Guatemala and Belize, arriving in Mexico in 1991, where he settled in Guadalajara. As a professional photographer, his work has been featured in many expositions. His clients include the Jalisco Government, SECTUR, magazines and nationally known business firms. Upon arriving in Puerto Vallarta, he fell in love with its cobblestoned streets and provincial beauty. He resides here with his wife, Jhovane.

Acknowledgements

My immense gratitude to the many people who have helped me, directly or indirectly, to explore the beauties of Puerto Vallarta. I specially want to thank John Welzenbach, who with his great love for Vallarta, was always ready to come and photograph my projects. To Mark Callanan, for spending so many weekends participating in our adventures, and because no precipice was too high for him to climb for a great photograph! Also, my thanks to Danilo Rottigni, who suddenly appeared a couple of weeks ago, and has graciously allowed me to use some of his fabulous photographs. To Leticia Alarcón for lending me some of her pictures. To my friend and colleague, Sandra Ryan, who had the patience to run all over town searching for correct telephone numbers and addresses, as well as her help

in editing the English version of this book. To Penny Osuna for her generous time and hidden talent. My thanks to the Department of Tourism, especially to Yolanda Franco, for her support and to Martín Corona for having sacrificed so many weekends, taking us to explore marvelous and wonderful places.



J. W.

To Carlos Munguía for continuing to be an endless fountain of knowledge. Thanks to Ricardo Díaz Borioli for teaching me about ecology. To Margarita Garrido for her collaboration and enthusiasm. To Óscar Frey, Isabel Cárdenas and the guides from Open Air Expeditions, for being ready and willing to explore new sites. To my husband, Dean Ross, for believing in this book, for sharing the excitement of finding unheard of locations, and always being willing to drive his van over the rocky roads we encountered.

My eternal gratitude to Puerto Vallarta and its townspeople for sharing the magic of this paradise with me.

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Puerto Vallarta is...

Introduction

Magic, the sea, spectacular sunsets, the lush jungle mountain ranges. It is a small traditional city, full of art, romance, fun and joy and above all, it is the home of gentle people who welcome you with open arms.

Upon arriving, you'll realize that there are so many things to do, and you'll want to do it all: walking about town, marveling at the attractive boutiques filled with colorful crafts, parasailing above the calm Pacific ocean, exploring the silent underwater world, mountain biking into the jungle, drifting in a hot air balloon at sunset, dining at the many restaurants or simply enjoying a siesta under a palapa. There are so many things to do, but a sense of peace will take over and you'll think, maybe, I'll wait until tomorrow.

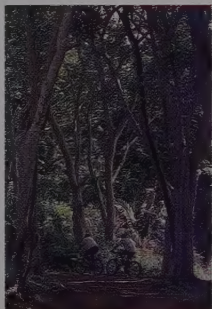
There is no hurry, nobody is rushing about; take it easy –somehow, there is time for everything.



J. W.

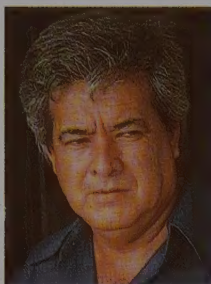


J. W.



M. C.

My Puerto Vallarta



Manuel Lepe: *"I quit school in the fifth grade and have been painting ever since. For me, Puerto Vallarta is simple palapas; the innocence of its children and the things they talk about; the red-tiled roofs of the typical homes and downtown buildings. Puerto Vallarta is the sea; our Virgin of Guadalupe with her marvelous crown; it is the women washing their clothes in the river; the burros walking down our cobblestone streets. Puerto Vallarta overflows with little boys and girls and wherever one looks, there are little ones. That is why there are children everywhere in my paintings. Puerto Vallarta is a paradise".*

Manuel, a native of Vallarta, was designated "National Painter of Mexico". He is internationally famous, the pioneer of the *naif* style of art in Puerto Vallarta. He died in 1984.



M. C.

Lorena Ruiz: *"I love Puerto Vallarta for the wonderful memories I have of my childhood, because for me, it was an extraordinary haven full of the natural exuberance and warmth of my people. All of this makes me feel proud to be a native of Puerto Vallarta".*

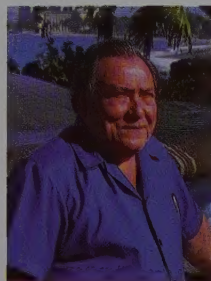
Lorena, a native of Vallarta, was the only Latin American to be selected to carry the torch for the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games in the United States.

Carlos Munguía Fregoso: *"In Vallarta memories spring from the cobblestone streets through the passing of time, or they might be hidden in the ancient adobe walls.*

But, Vallarta is not only memories; it is a watercolor that comes to life before us; it is the reverberation of the sun on white sands and in the blue water of the sea.

It is the green of the mountains that shade this sleepy village of red tiles, of whitewashed walls covered with multicolored bougainvillea. It is mariachi music, the tolling of bells, the murmur of the waves on a moonlit night. Vallarta is a smile and the kind word of its people for all visitors. Vallarta is the joy of life, human warmth, it is your home".

Carlos, a native of Vallarta, is the official historian of the city, as well as the Director of Art and Culture for the Municipal Government.



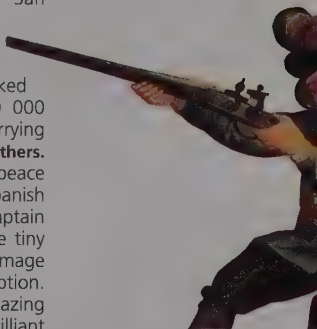
M. C.

Puerto Vallarta was

Introduction

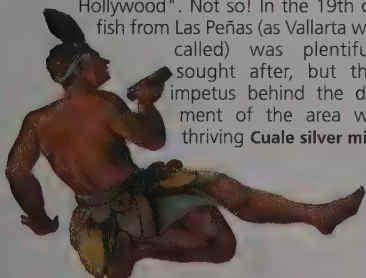
A stopping place for both Spaniards and pirates during the XVI century. These famous corsairs dropped anchor in the bay en route to Acapulco and Manila. Arriving in this paradise, the crews rested beneath the palm trees, bathed in the Pacific waters, feasted upon tropical fruits, and enjoyed themselves in the company of friendly natives.

The Spanish arrive: This enchanting beauty also attracted Francisco Cortés de San Buenaventura, a close relative of Hernán Cortés, when in 1524, he discovered Puerto Vallarta. From a distance, he and his crew sighted a beautiful valley and walked toward it. Awaiting their arrival were 20 000 Indians, armed with bows and arrows, carrying **lances adorned with brilliantly colored feathers**. Francisco Cortés tried to mediate a friendly peace but was unsuccessful. With less than 100 Spanish men, he decided to retreat, however, his captain insisted upon a show of Spanish valor. The tiny army had four flags, one adorned with an image of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception. When ordered to attack, something amazing happened as this flag began to radiate a brilliant light forming a halo around the Virgin. Both the Indians and Spaniards were left speechless! The Indians knelt at the feet of Father Fray Juan de Villadiego. And the battle was over. Was this a genuine miracle or sorcery? Perhaps the famous magic of Puerto Vallarta had now begun. The conquerors christened this place "**Valle de Banderas**". Later it became "Bahía de Banderas" or "Bay of Flags", referring to this miraculous event.



Guadalupe Sánchez and the Cuale Mines:

Even today, Puerto Vallarta is described as "a sleepy fishing village lifted from obscurity by Hollywood". Not so! In the 19th century, fish from Las Peñas (as Vallarta was then called) was plentiful and sought after, but the true impetus behind the development of the area was the thriving **Cuale silver mines**.





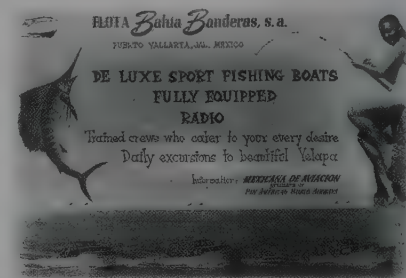
Guadalupe Sánchez
and family.
Photo of
YOLANDA FRANCO



ÓSCAR ROSALES



ÓSCAR ROSALES



ÓSCAR ROSALES

Huge quantities of salt were shipped in for the processing of ore. This was supplied by a merchant from Cihuatlán named **Guadalupe Sánchez**. He transported salt to Las Peñas in rowboats, and workers then loaded it onto burros for the trek to the mines. Don Guadalupe built a small shed covered with palm leaves to ward off the sun's rays, and to rest while the muleteers collected the salt. This small shed was the beginning of what would become Puerto Vallarta. On December 12, 1851, Sánchez relocated his entire family to Las Peñas. Since December 12 is the day of the Virgin, he named the place "Las Peñas de Santa María de Guadalupe". As word spread new inhabitants came and Vallarta kept growing. Guadalupe Sánchez is considered the founder of Puerto Vallarta and its first historian. He died in 1924.

Las Peñas was renamed Puerto Vallarta: Ever since 1851, Vallarta has been known as Las Peñas. In 1918, it was renamed "Puerto Vallarta", honoring a famous jurist, Ignacio Luis Vallarta.

Hollywood discovers Puerto Vallarta: The famous Hollywood director, John Huston, created a flurry of publicity for Vallarta when he chose the tiny village of Mismaloya as the site for filming *The Night of the Iguana*, starring Ava Gardner and Richard Burton. The actor's off-screen notorious romance with Elizabeth Taylor, (who was not part of the cast) but joined him on location attracted the world's attention and this tranquil little town of Vallarta was changed forever.

The Huicholes

For many, the Huicholes and Coras Indians are the most mysterious and fascinating people in Mexico. They belong to one of the most ancient ethnic groups of México. They still preserve their language, lifestyle and traditions.

Fortunately, during the Spanish Conquest they escaped from the Spaniards into the Sierra Madre mountains, making their villages at high altitudes of approximately 4 600 ft. (1 400 m) –mainly in the states of Jalisco and Nayarit, isolated from the rest of the world.

The Huicholes speak a dialect similar to that of the ancient Aztecs, and jealously guard their customs. The most respected and powerful member of the village is the *mara'akame*, or better known as the **Shaman**. Shamans often hold other high posts in the civil hierarchy: counselors, elders, and doctors. The Shaman carries his *muwieri*, a sacred stick bound with bright yarn, hanging feathers and small pieces of mirror, or snake rattles. The Shaman uses the *muwieri* to speak to the many gods that direct the lives of the Huicholes.

Religious ceremonies take place throughout the year, and one of the most significant is the *wiriku-ta*, their "holy land" in the Desert of Catorce, San Luis Potosí, 300 miles away. Here they collect large quantities of *hikuri*, also known as **peyote**, the buttons of a cactus which contain mescaline. When eaten it produces a hallucinogenic state as well as an excess of energy that allows them to dance without tiring for more than four hours during ceremonies. It also has thirst quenching abilities. The Huicholes believe that with **peyote**, they can and often do communicate with their gods. For special celebrations, intricate designs are painted on children's faces and even the pets are decorated with beads to ward off demons.

The **Huicholes** are known in this region for their **art**, which combines religion and mythology. They create figures and amulets traditionally used by the Shamans utilizing materials such as beading, yarn, wood and animal skins. Their work is intricate and exacting. Through their art, they implore the gods to grant them good crops and many sons.

Introduction



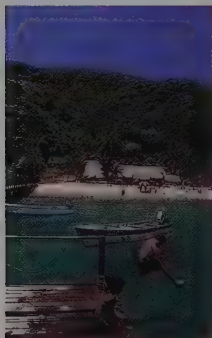
D. R.

Unfortunately, food is scarce among the Huicholes, creating a precarious situation among young and old. They suffer from digestive and respiratory problems, as well as a multitude of other sicknesses: only 65% of the children live to the age of five. To survive, Huicholes come several times a year to Vallarta to sell their products and crafts. If you wish to help the Huicholes, call Mrs. Rosario Carrandi
© 4-27-39.

Part of the proceeds from this guide will go to help the Huicholes.

*Introduction***Puerto Vallarta today**

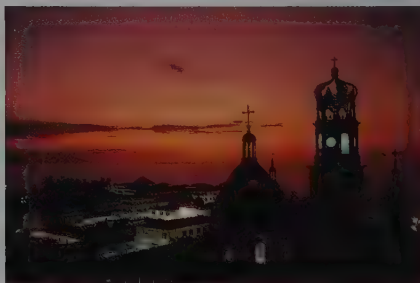
J. W.



M. C.

- Is a tropical paradise.
- The streets are narrow and paved with cobblestones.
- The houses are small with red-tiled roofs.
- The azure sea bestows calm and peace.
- The mountain range creates mystery.
- The sunsets, our daily blessing from God.
- Beaches appear as treasures nestled close to the mountains.
- Beneath the sea is a world of enchantment.
- The atmosphere is natural, happy, and delightfully Mexican.
- Children romp and play on the boardwalk.
- Colorful vendors are part of the folklore.
- The people of Vallarta have loving hearts.
- No one is a stranger, everybody is a friend.
- Cozy restaurants add to the quaint atmosphere.
- The bars erupt with gaiety and music.
- The art galleries are intense with diversity and creativity.
- The hotels compare with the finest in the world.
- Every watersport is available.
- Ecological excursions abound on both land and sea.
- Bungee jumps satisfy the intrepid.

The streets bustle with activity. A burro makes way for a motorcycle, which in turn, dodges a brand new luxury car. The old and the new connect, then blend in harmony. Vallarta is a kaleidoscope of faces, colors and flavors. What is the secret of this enchantment? I invite you to discover the magic of Puerto Vallarta.



J. W.

Did you know?

Introduction



...**Çiutla** means plumage in the Ziutepetl dialect, and was long ago the name for what is now Puerto Vallarta.

... Puerto Vallarta is on **La Costa Alegre**, in the northwest corner of Jalisco State on Banderas Bay.

...Banderas Bay is the largest natural bay in the

Republic of Mexico, the second largest in North America, and **the seventh largest bay in the world**.

...Seen from the air, Banderas Bay looks like a horseshoe. The southern point is **Cabo Corrientes**; **Punta Mita** is at the extreme northern end. Between Cabo Corrientes and Punta Mita, a direct line would measure slightly less than twenty miles.

...Banderas Bay is considered one of the **deepest bays in the world**. Its exact depth is unknown. No instrumentation has been able to accurately locate the bottom. Some calculations project a depth of about **6 172 ft. (1 800 m) or well over a mile deep**.

...In theory, Banderas Bay was created by a huge crater in a dying volcano that sank well beneath the sea.

...**The first born of foreign parents** in Bahía de Banderas was on the 27th of February, 1861. It was a girl, daughter of Captain Thomas William Williams and Elisa Azelia Griswold Williams.

...**The sister cities of Puerto Vallarta** are varied: in the United States, Encino and Santa Barbara, California and in Europe, Jijón in Spain, and Siofok in Hungary.

...There is a community of over **5 000 foreigners** (mostly Americans and Canadians) in Puerto Vallarta.

...**Pitillal** is a place named after a type of plant and is the home of more than 65 000 **Vallartenses**.



D. R.

If you have...



J. W.



M. C.


Puerto Vallarta is at once both small and large. There is time to see a lot and time to relax as well.

If you have two days

The first day simply relax on the beach in the shade of a palapa! You won't have to leave your chair to buy marvelous arts and crafts. Strolling vendors will offer you an enormous variety of goodies, from colorful clothing to carved wooden sculptures. You'll have a lot of fun bargaining, and if you buy from one vendor, all the others will come with their merchandise.



J. W.

The second day **tour the downtown area**  **page 16**. At the end of the day, go to the boardwalk to stroll with the townspeople as you walk along the *malecón*, admiring the sunset. At night, visit the various boutiques in town, or go to the city market near the bridge. Many places are open for business until 9:00 PM.

If you have three days

On the third day take an excursion by boat to **Las Ánimas**, **Quimixto** and / or **Yelapa** beaches. If you are an avid snorkeler or ecology enthusiast, take a boat to the **Marietas Islands**.



J. W.



D R

If you have five days

The fourth day calls for lounging on a beach north of the city. There are many, including **Nuevo Vallarta**, **Bucerías** and **Punta Mita**. They all feature beautiful, long stretches of soft white sand. See ***Touring the northern beaches*** ➤ page 30. On ***the fifth day***, try an ecological tour by bicycle, kayak or on foot. It is a must if you love nature. If you prefer something less athletic, spend a morning at **Terra Noble**. This center offers a unique experience and opportunity to learn about pre-Hispanic art and commune with nature.

If you have seven days

Surrender to the magic of Vallarta and choose the tour most intriguing to you. A trip to **Guadalajara**, the capital of Jalisco, with a stop at Tequila, home of the famous liquor, is worthwhile. If you love real adventure, try an excursion

For the intrepid tourist who is in good physical condition, an outing to the Waterfalls of Mismaloya, Patolli Rock, Petroglyphs of Las Palmas or the Cave Paintings, are sensational! See Adventure tours ➤ page 40.



to the mountain villages of **San Sebastián**. See ***Places near by*** ➤ page 47.

Sightseeing downtown

2-3 hours



J. W.

The tourist police are dressed in white shorts, white socks and safari style hats. They speak some English.



J. W.

From December 1-12, all of Vallarta including the tourists participate in the processions and pageants honoring the patron saint The Virgin of Guadalupe. All hearts are full of love for the "Virgin Morena", whose skin is the color of her people.

There are three ways to do this; by yourself, with a tourist guide, or on an excursion tour.

► **The Zócalo:** There is not a single town or city in Mexico that doesn't have a *zócalo*, the plaza or main square. Puerto Vallarta, following tradition, has its main square downtown in front of the government offices. Depending upon the hour of day, the plaza is either calm and peaceful or bustling with life. To the west is a **statue of Ignacio L. Vallarta**, the famous jurist for whom Vallarta was named. Several times a week local musicians gather in the square to serenade the townsfolk.

For time schedules of activities, cross the square toward the church and to the left is the **Setujal Tourism** office. You can get all kinds of information there. The *zócalo* is an ideal place to rest in the shade while absorbing the flavor of Vallarta. Perhaps you would enjoy a visit to the main church. Cross the street with the help of a traffic policeman.

► **Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe:** is charmingly simple, a combination of ancient and modern customs. It has witnessed all the joys and sorrows of townspeople and visitors alike. Here a modestly dressed elderly woman prays with utter devotion; a glowing girl in a party dress celebrates her "sweet fifteenth birthday," an illusion-filled couple join their destinies, mourners come for comfort. Young people and tourists attend mass dressed in the latest style. Look toward the central dome to see frescos that represent pagan scenes of human sacrifice. In contrast is the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, strikingly simi-



M. C.

lar to the original Virgin that appeared centuries ago. Some people believe that it was painted by angels, but in reality it is the work of the Mexican artist Ignacio Ramírez. Outside, the bell tower is a magnificent wrought-iron crown, supported by eight figures of angels. For almost everyone, this crown is and always will be the symbol of Vallarta. If you become lost, simply look for the crown as a reference point.

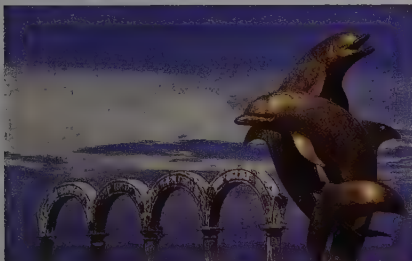
► **Mural of Manuel Lepe:** Return to the plaza and enter the City Hall-main government building, the large building to your right (north). As you enter the courtyard, continue to your left and go up the staircase. You will experience the beauty and charm of the largest mural by Vallarta's most distinguished and prominent artist, Manuel Lepe. Unfortunately, he died before it was completed. Lepe's fame extends the world over, and he is listed in the "French Directory of Naïf Painters". Celebrities and art collectors worldwide own and enjoy his paintings. For more information about Manuel Lepe. See **Touring the art galleries** 📖 page 24. From City Hall reenter the plaza, turn to the right and cross the street carefully (there is usually a tourist policeman present). There, with the ocean as a backdrop is the open air theatre.



M. C.

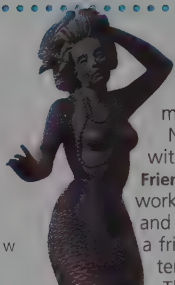


J. W.



D. R.

► **The Aquiles Serdán Theater:** You will see four graceful arches made of quarry stone. Stay awhile and watch this area come alive with festivities. Children play here and there, couples shyly embrace and kiss. Women selling hot corn-on-the-cob look upon the scene. Artists exhibit and sell their paintings. At night there are parties, ceremonies and concerts. Everyone goes to see and be seen. In the theater, you will become consumed with the unique color and flavor of the authentic Vallarta experience. It is also the beginning of the boardwalk, or *malecón*, stretching from south to north.

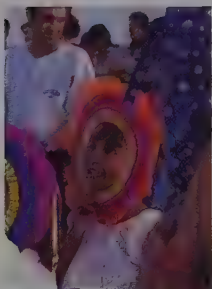


► **The sculptures:** Silent figures of stone and bronze, full of symbolism, history and special meanings.

Next to the theater is a fountain with three dolphins called **The Friendship Fountain**. This fountain is the work of the sculptor James Bottoms, and was donated to Puerto Vallarta as a friendship gesture by one of the sister cities- Santa Barbara, California.

The dolphin figures are cast in bronze enabling them to retain their beauty. The legend behind it proclaims that *Hutash*, Goddess of Mother Earth, saw many children in her kingdom, and created a rainbow so that they might descend to earth. The children were cautioned "never to look down", but some children did and began to fall into the water. *Hutash* immediately turned them into dolphins to prevent them from drowning. Since then, the Chumash Indians have never forgotten their "water children" and consider dolphins to be relatives. They call them *Alukai*, meaning "to surround, protect and go in peace".

Nearby is the statue of **Tritón y Nereida**, half fish half human reaching lovingly toward one another. It symbolizes the Jalisco coast, now known as **La Costa Alegre**. Tritón is the son of Neptune while Nereida is one of 50 Mediterranean sea-nymphs, of Doris and Nereo. The sea nymphs or daughters symbolize the play of waves in the ocean. Curiously, Triton was originally designed as Neptune, holding a trident in his hand, but the trident disappeared. No one knows what happened to it.



M. C



J. W

The most photographed sculpture in town is **The Seahorse**, a child astride its back, greeting all who pass by.

Walking north you will find two lovers cast in bronze, sitting on a bench silently contemplating the ocean. This sculpture is called **La Nostalgia**. It was inspired by the personal love story of the famous sculptor Ramiz Barquet and his first love and present wife Nelly. The figures radiate profound joy. They speak of the beauty of creation, the richness of life, the yearning to return to this moment when two souls connected at this very spot on the *malecón*. Quite a tribute. **The Fisherman** is yet another sculpture. More information can be found under **Tour of the Cuale Island** ➡ page 22.



J W



J W

The Seahorse, a work by Rafael Zamarripa, portrays the friendship, sincerity and joy with which Vallartenses welcome visitors and it is the symbol of Puerto Vallarta. Some people believe the reason **The Seahorse** is the symbol of Puerto Vallarta, is that it is an inspiration of sculpturer Zamarripa. As Carlos Munguía, town historian suggests, perhaps Zamarripa was inspired by an ancient Greek sculpture

called **The Child and the Dolphin**, and he decided to change the dolphin to a seahorse. Other old-timers believe the ocean used to be full of seahorses which fishermen brought home, dried and hung from their palapas, only to be carried away by visitors as souvenirs. Perhaps this is the reason why the original statue was placed at the southern end of Los Muertos beach called **Las Pilitas**. Damaged by the waves, it was sent to be repaired and then disappeared for an unknown time. A second sculpture was commissioned and later erected in the middle of the malecón across from the lighthouse. Much later the original was mysteriously found and it was relocated at the southern end of **Los Muertos Beach-Las Pilitas**, where it still stands today.

Few people realize this popular wide seaside promenade or walkway which gives so much life to Vallarta, took about 40 years to become what we enjoy today. In 1913, it began as a barrier against the sea, an idea of Leoncio Blanco an emissary of the governor of Jalisco at that time. Many years later, Major Pinelos, an inspector from Jalisco, observed that the pier looked more like a rampart than a pier! He suggested building a dike. In 1927, Major Ocampo and his neighbors erected the dike, planted some palms, and renamed it Ocampo Boulevard. Around 1936, Agustín Flores donated funds for the first stage of the **malecón**, which stretched from the theater to the lighthouse, about 10 blocks ending, in a narrow path that continued north to the Hotel Rosita. Young boys loved to race their bicycles along this trail without fear of falling. The final section of the **malecón** wasn't completed until 1953. It was renamed Díaz Ordaz in latter years.

Padre Hidalgo was the leader of the **Independence**. Sparking the beginning of the 1910 Mexican Revolution, his famous Grito de Dolores, a call for freedom, mobilized the Mexican people. He is the father of the country.



► **The malecón:** If you really want to experience the heartbeat of Vallarta, you must stroll Paseo Díaz Ordaz, known as the *malecón*. The boardwalk, or *malecón*, is the place to see and be seen. It comes to life at night, specially on weekends—particularly **Sunday afternoons**. Vallartenses, dressed in their best, take their families on an outing. Tourists in their resort-wear mingle with the locals. Young people flirt, vendors sell their wares and the magic embraces everyone.



► **Hidalgo Park:** is one block north from the end of the *malecón*. On the west side is a statue of Miguel Hidalgo, father of the Mexican Independence, by the sculptor José Esteban Ramírez Guare. This park was inaugurated to honor the brilliant teacher in 1954. This is an ideal place to take a break and take pictures of the local vendors in their stalls, the children, or of yourselves. Or to rest for a moment.

Across from the park is the **Refugio Church**, a simple, rather modern building. It is a nice place to rest or meditate for a moment. From here, return to the *malecón* and treat yourself to a delicious ice cream cone at Bings or Baskin Robins. If a cocktail sounds like a good idea, stop for a *margarita*. Remember, you are in the land of tequila!

Touring the
cobblestone streets

2-3 hours

Things to do



J W

To continue discovering Vallarta, be sure to wear comfortable shoes and explore all of the small hidden streets. Glance discreetly into open windows, go up tiny alleys, chat with townspeople. One small street to the left of the **Zócalo** is called Independencia and will lead you to the **Guadalupe Church** located on **Hidalgo**. To the right is **Zaragoza**. Walking up this street (east) you arrive on **Miramar**. This is Gringo Gulch, a neighborhood famous for its houses perched on a precipice. It is here that Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor bought two homes facing each other, and joined them with a pink bridge that arches over **Zaragoza**. You may also want to take advantage of the breathtaking views of the **Río Cuale**. Continue down **Miramar** (south) which becomes a charming lane with numerous gaily painted stairs. A quick turn to the right (west) and you are on your way back to the **malecón**. If you walk on Miramar towards the **Church** (north) take **Iturbide** down (west) and you will arrive back on **Juárez**. Continue your journey to the Art Galleries, most of which are located on **Juárez** and **Morelos**.



J W



J W

Tour of the Cuale Island

2-3 hours



M. C

Another little hideout, nestled below two bridges is La Isla del Cuale. In early times, the only way to reach the island or cross the river was to use a hanging bridge, always in motion, which provided lots of merriment for youngsters (there are still three bridges today.) From the *zócalo*, walk south on Morelos a couple of blocks, take the bridge until you see two stairways, one on either side. Each will take you to a quiet place where you can stroll under majestic trees with their gnarled branches, listen to the birds sing, sit on a convenient bench, or explore little shops; no need

to hurry.

► **Cuale Museum:** walk west and on your right will be a small museum displaying various pre-Hispanic artifacts found in the region. Continue west until you see where the river flows into the sea. The Cuale River originates at the foot of the Cumbre Blanca, over a thousand meters high in the Sierra Madre mountains, hundreds of kilometers away.

► **The Music School:** return by the same path only go east or towards the mountains to find the music school, which provides classes for all ages at a nominal fee.

► **The Art Center:** is a branch of the esteemed Instituto de Arte de San Miguel de Allende. Classes in painting, sculpture, Spanish and English are offered.

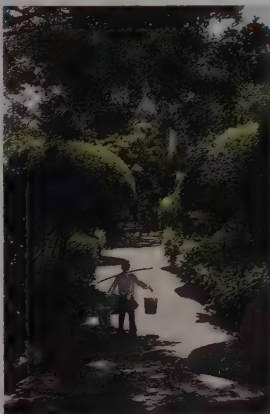
► **The statue of John Huston:** is in the middle of the island. This famous movie director was instrumental in launching Puerto Vallarta to recognition and fame when in 1963 he chose this town for the filming of *The Night of the Iguana*. The torrid romance between his star, Richard Burton, and actress Elizabeth Taylor added the notoriety that put this place in the news all over the world.



J. W.

► **Sculpture of the Fisherman:**

return to the main bridge, cross the street, go north (to the right). At the end of the street, between **Rodríguez** and **Libertad** is a sculpture of "**Isidro**", "the minstrel fisherman" a charming and gentle man carrying an oar hung with his catch of the day. In the old days, he walked the street banging his knife on the oar and singing out, "fresh fish"! Sculptor **Ramiz Barquet** sees the soul of the Vallartenses in "Isidro" who carries a song in his heart. The reason Barquet's statues are thinner and taller than normal is that he visualizes "spirituality as vertical, soaring heavenward in an attempt to reach God".



J W

► **The City Market:** is left of the sculpture called "The Fisherman", located at the end of Insurgentes street and continues down A. Rodríguez street. Here you will find an abundance of Mexican arts and crafts. Revel in all sorts of colors, forms, and textures. The name of the game is compare prices, then bargain, bargain, bargain! Up the street two blocks to the west is the **Pueblo Viejo** market. Although a smaller market, it is more spacious and airy. There are more shops that you will enjoy in and around A. Rodríguez street. Dine at restaurants serving typical Vallarta cuisine.

Enjoy drinking fresh coconut water at a stand on the corner of Rodríguez and Juárez.



D R



J. W.

Touring the art galleries

1-2 hours

Vallarta, besides being picturesque, is a treasure grove for lovers of eclectic art. It has become a true art colony.

► **Galería Uno:** Morelos 561, corner of Corona street ☎ 2-09-08. Begin with one of Vallarta's oldest and most prestigious galleries. Galería Uno was established in 1971, and both its art and its architectural design are worth seeing. You will admire quality paintings as well as sculptures by international, Mexican and Vallarta artists.

► **Lepe Museum and Gallery:** Juárez 533 ☎ 2-55-15. From Morelos, turn left on Corona and between Galeana and Mina, is the Lepe Gallery. Manuel Lepe, illustrious native of Vallarta, had a passion for this town and its children. These sentiments are expressed in his ingenious paintings which radiate color, joy, and light. The recipient of worldwide recognition, the walls of the museum are covered with citations from presidents, celebrities, and famous art collectors. In 1976 he was proclaimed "Mexico's Premier *Naif* and National Painter". Lepe died in 1984. His paintings of little angels, children, and Vallarta scenes will endure forever. Visit the Lepe Museum to feel the spirit of this gifted man, father and painter who always said, "Vallarta is paradise".

► **Rosas Blancas Gallery:** Juárez 523, ☎ 2-11-68. From Lepe's turn right and two doors down you will find this charming gallery, which features a small cafe and art bookstore. Here you can admire collections of very talented Mexican and Latin American artists.

► **Pueblito del Sol Cultural Center:** Juárez 614, ☎ 2-31-15. Cross the street and walk a couple of blocks north where there is an art center that exhibits the works of contemporary local painters and Mexican artists. There is a small library, and a salon for concerts and theater presentations where cultural activities are held throughout the year.

► **Galería Parroquia:** Independencia 231. Turn left-east off Juárez street, for a collection of local artists, with an emphasis on Vallarta landscapes.

► **Sergio Bustamante:** Juárez 275, ☎ 2-11-20. Return to Juárez street and walk past the main plaza. The sculptures of Sergio Bustamante, Mexican surrealist artist, have received international fame. His jewelry designs are small works of art.





MANUEL LEPE

► **Galería Vallarta:** Juárez 263, ☎ 2-02-90. A few doors down you'll find this gallery which sells a large variety of paintings, sculptures, masks, crystal, and jewelry.

► **Galería Indígena:** Juárez 270, ☎ 2-30-07. Crossing the street, you can visit one of the largest collections of masks and other indigenous art from all over Mexico.

► **Galería Pacífico:** Insurgentes 109, ☎ 2-19-82. Continue down Juárez to Libertad street, turn to the left and cross the Río Cuale bridge. At the end of the bridge you'll locate another of Vallarta's most prestigious and oldest galleries characterized by its display of fine international, Mexican, and local artists.

You will also find other galleries spread throughout Vallarta of excellent quality.

► **Art Mill:** a studio as well as art school. Aldama #278, ☎ 2-57-27.

► **Jesús Tello:** modern, bright-colored metal sculptures. G. Sánchez #756, ☎ 3-14-07.

► **Nevaj:** folkloric art. Edificio Malecón #4, Morelos, ☎ 2-69-59.

► **Galería Pyramid:** Huichol Indian art. Basilio Badillo #272, ☎ 2-31-61.

► **Galería Dante:** handmade pre-Columbian Mamá Mono art. Basilio Badillo #269, ☎ 2-24-77.

► **Contreras Cueva Raquel:** Mexican art. Lázaro Cárdenas #266, ☎ 3-20-36.

► **Galería Olinalá:** ceremonial masks and carvings from Michoacán and Guerrero. Lázaro Cárdenas #274, ☎ 2-49-95.

► **Galería Muvieri:** weavings, paintings and Huichol art. Libertad #177, ☎ 3-26-95.

► **Arte las Américas:** contemporary Mexican art. Marina Las Palmas, ☎ 1-19-85.

► **Galería Javier Niño:** combination of *naif* and surrealistic art. Plaza Marina, ☎ 2-36-28.

► **Galería Lepe:** *naif* art. Gómez #128, ☎ 2-01-06.



J. W.

Puerto Vallarta has been and continues to be a source of inspiration for national and international artists. Upon finishing this tour, you will have felt the magic of Puerto Vallarta which inspired the works of painters like Manuel Lepe, Ada Colorina, Rogelio Díaz, Javier Niño, Jesús Tello, Rodrigo Lepe, Ignacio Álvarez, Roberto Bermejo, Martha Gilbert, Kathy Van Rohen and Evelyn Boren amongst others.

The Beaches. *Picture intense blue seas, emerald mountain ranges, white sand. Each beach has its own charm. Some have gentle surfs, others are rugged. Some are quiet and isolated—one is even mysterious.*

Touring the southern beaches

There are many beaches south of town. You can reach them by car, bus, or even walking. Others require a boat. You choose. There is time to visit them all.



M C



J W

► **Los Muertos / Del Sol:** is centrally located and a favorite of Vallarta residents. Although its name might sound ominous, you will have a great time here. Large, full of people, it boasts many good restaurants. You can rent a beach chair under a palapa, hire a jet ski, try a parachute ride, or hop on a **banana** for a spin in the water. The unusual name of this beach comes from an encounter between some smugglers and natives during the last century, leaving a few dead bodies strewn about. It is located in the southern part of town, at the end of Venustiano Carranza and Basilio Badillo.

► **Las Amapas:** is one of the secrets of Vallarta. It is small, has palm groves, a good surf, and is slightly off the beaten track. There are no tourist amenities. Barra de Navidad Road, km 2, descending Santa Bárbara street to the left, continue to the end of the slope. You can also take the footpath from the end of Los Muertos Beach.

► **Conchas Chinas:** is a small beach with crystal clear water, and practically no waves due to the rocks that protect it, but there are no shade trees so take an umbrella for comfort. Barra de Navidad Road, km 2.4 (past the Conchas Chinas market) take the side road on your right until you reach the entrance at the end of the road.

► **Punta Negra:** is a beach with soft sand, very little surf, some palms for shade, and very popular with the locals on weekends.

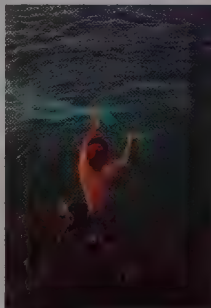
Sometimes you can rent boats, ride the **banana** or parasail. There are few tourist amenities. Barra de Navidad Road, km 4. Take some shoes for the rugged descent to the beach.

► **Garza Blanca:** is a small, beautiful, white sand beach, featuring lush palms and crystal clear water. Although empty during the week, it is packed with *Vallartenses* and tourists on weekends. There are no tourist amenities so come prepared. Barra de Navidad Road, km 6. Access to the beach is on the right side of the abandoned hotel.

► **Gemelas:** are two of the most lovely beaches in Vallarta. Shaped like half-moons at the foot of the mountains, the surf is calm, perfect for swimming. Although the condominiums and hotel nearby have private access for cars, one can use a public stairway next to the condos. Watersports and a restaurant are available at the hotel. Take Barra de Navidad Road and stop at km 8.

► **Mismaloya:** is the most famous beach because it was here that *The Night of the Iguana* was filmed, launching the tourist boom that followed. The beach is beautiful and very popular. The ocean is perfect for swimming. There is a large hotel which does not allow the use of its facilities to the public. However, lunching on the beach in one of the rustic restaurants is also fun. Work off the calories with parasailing, jet-skiing, or kayaking. Rent a boat and go snorkeling. Access to Mismaloya beach is via a dirt road adjacent to the hotel. Don't attempt to enter through the hotel as it is for guests only. Barra de Navidad Road, km 11.

► **Boca de Tomatlán:** is a little fishing village hidden between Cerro de la Cumbre and Cerro Verde. The beach is small, sparsely populated, featuring rustic restaurants that serve fresh fish.



M C



M C

Los Arcos are 3 giant rocks to the north of Mismaloya. They have been declared a national park. Tunnels and caverns have been carved into them over millennia by sea erosion. Good snorkeling-fair diving.



J. W.

Don't miss the *ceviche* (fish cocktail) or the ***pico de gallo***, a mix of tropical fruits, cucumber, *jícama* and chile.

Practically all of the fish sold in the region comes from Boca de Tomatlán. Since the Horcones River flows into the ocean here, the sea water is not very salty. Here is where you board the water taxis to all the southern beaches with no access by road.



J. W.

► **Las Ánimas:** is a beach about an hour away reachable by rental boat from Vallarta (twenty minutes from Tomatlán). Catch a **panga**, or collective water taxi, which charges each person a small fee, and will not leave port until they are full. There are also luxury boats for rent, and cruises but these are only boarded in Vallarta. Las Ánimas has a gentle surf and soft sand. As usual, there are rustic restaurants all around the beach with colorful chairs. For fun, try parasailing or a ride on the big yellow **banana**.

► **Quimixto:** is another beach accessible only via water. Surrounded by boulders, it is a paradise for underwater adventures. It has a splendid beach, the sea is very placid, and there is a river with a **waterfall** (more impressive after the rainy season). Fresh seafood is served at the restaurant. To reach Quimixto, take any of the cruises, such as those that include food and drink, and a thirty



M. C.



J. W.

minute stop at Los Arcos for swimming. You can also board a **panga** departing from Mismaloya or Tomatlán.

► **Yelapa:** is a beach populated with foreigners and locals who wouldn't want to be anywhere else! It is a true escape from civilization. Again,



there is no road, but plenty of boats leave Vallarta for this southern utopia just two hour away (be careful –the last boat leaves to return to Vallarta at 4 PM). Yelapa is the oldest, most populated village in this area of the bay. Those who like ad-

venture might wish to spend the night in one of its rustic cabins, sans telephones. You might even have to share a bathroom, but the atmosphere is relaxed and pleasant. Certainly, if you enjoy the unusual, try it. During the rainy season (June to September), visit the beautiful **waterfall** in the mountains. The path to the waterfall is steep and dangerous on horseback, so we recommend walking, especially if you are physically fit. Yelapa residents are dedicated to helping tourists. They also fish daily, so enjoy a meal of fresh seafood.



D. R.

Touring the northern beaches in the State of Nayarit

The beaches of our neighboring state are distinctive and truly wonderful. They are extensive, prolonged and shallow, no architect could have planned anything as perfect as this gift from nature. Be aware that there is a time change between Puerto Vallarta and Nayarit; it is one hour earlier in the state of Nayarit.

► **Nuevo Vallarta:** is a fairly new tourist center, enhanced by stately shade trees, surrounded by charming canals. Various luxury hotels are located on miles of white sand beaches which are rarely crowded. When the surf is up, this is an ideal place to go surfing. Watersports abound; they include water skiing, parasailing, sailboating, wind-surfing, wave runners, **bananas** and fishing. During the season, it's the place to catch **Mahi Mahi** and large sailfish. Because of its terrain this is an ideal place for bicycling. Ten minutes north of the airport on Hwy 200, Nuevo Vallarta can be reached by water, automobile, bus, or taxi.



M. C.

A personal recommendation; don't fail to stop at Pie in the Sky bakery, even if you are just passing through **Bucerías**. Their chocolate items are sensational.



M. C.

► **Bucerías:** does not appear to be much of a tourist attraction from the road, but if you go through the town toward the ocean you'll discover one of the longest beaches in this area. It is a favorite spot with locals and tourists to enjoy the ocean. There are several rustic restaurants featuring excellent seafood, with mariachi music for your entertainment. Sundays are specially popular with the locals. This is also an ideal place to camp for a few days. The town has four main roads lined with small shops, including grocery stores. At the north end is Huanacastle Beach, site of a few pretty little hotels, and a residential district.

Nuevo Vallarta



► **The beaches of Punta Mita:** appeal to tourists who like natural beauty. To explore them, take a car, bus or boat. By car, take Hwy 200 going north, turn left at the crossroads where the tourism office is (open sporadically) and continue on a couple of kilometers until you see them. Many of the beaches have no facilities.

► **La Cruz de Huanacaxtle:** is a small, sleepy fishing village offering a few little stores and simple restaurants. You might rent a rowboat to explore the area, or do a little fishing. We don't recommend swimming due to the water's contamination level here, except at La Manzanilla beach, that is very popular among *Vallartenses*.



J. W.



M. C.

► **Playa La Manzanilla:** is beautiful with sand that is golden or coral colored, and it extends around a small cove that is protected by giant white rocks. You can rent a chair in the shade of a palapa, or lunch in a rustic restaurant.

► **Playa Piedras Blancas:** is a small, isolated beach with crystal clear water-ideal for swimming and skin-diving. Many private boats anchor here. There are no amenities, nor shady spots to rest, so bring an umbrella and wear shoes. On week-days, the beach is deserted.



J. W.

► **Playa Destiladeras:** located exactly at km 8, where there are two restaurants made of rough tree branches (**palapas**). It is a favorite spot for surfers and body-surfers. The waves are just right for easy surfing, two-to five feet for a gentle ride. The best place for surfing is toward the end of the beach. The name, Destiladeras originates from the fresh water that slowly seeps from the green cliffs of Punta del Burro down to the sea.

Destiladeras is a great place to camp, since the natural pools provide fresh water solving your water problem.



M. C.

► **Playa Pontoque:** when you see the sign for Las Amapas Restaurant, turn left taking the dirt road and you will pass the sign saying **Restaurante Paraíso Escondido**. Continue through the woods to a crescent shape beach of coral-white sand. This beach, small and intimate, is full of palm trees, and its crystal water reflects the lush green jungle. The surf varies due to many reefs and rocks. Pontoque is ideal for skin-diving and snorkeling. There is good fishing for red snapper.

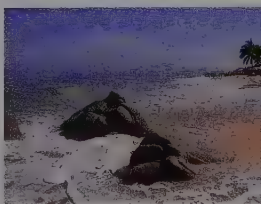
► **Playa Anclote:** (Anchor beach) at km 21 is a wide beach with a tranquil surf. At the extreme right the fishing boats are anchored. This beach has the largest population of locals, so many restaurants and services are available.

► **Emiliano Zapata:** is a beautiful beach divided into three sections by giant rocks. It is one of our favorites, combining singular beauty with lush vegetation providing shade. It is sparsely populated, probably because it is at the end of the bay without easy access. The surf can be quite strong at times. This beach is ideal for a day's outing. Remember to take your own drinking water and beverages for your picnic. Emiliano Zapata is the last town accessible by car or bus. At this point in the road a wall was built to restrict traffic and make way for a huge tourist development.

Restaurant Paraíso Escondido specializes in seafood and has a friendly atmosphere and caters to tourist tastes. It is a good place to camp in the shade of the jungle vegetation, but one must ask permission from the restaurant owner. Be sure to bring your own fresh drinking water. **Las Amapas Restaurant** is well known for its unusual menu. Local hunters supply exotic fare such as wild boar, deer, snake, and iguana. This is not a place for vegetarians! They are open daily.

In Anclote you can rent a boat to visit the Marieta Islands to snorkel, scuba dive, whale-watch (in the winter), or fish.

J. W.



Marina Vallarta



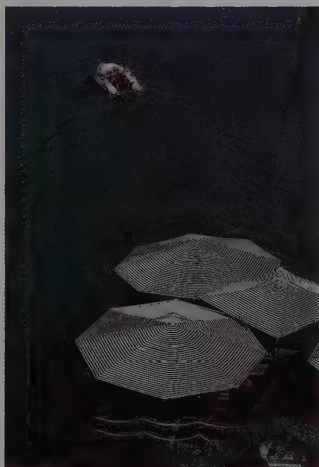
Touring The Marina

Thing to do

The Marina is a glimpse of modern Puerto Vallarta with a nautical theme. Here you will find a good golf course and a beautiful boardwalk (*malecón*). Begin your tour in the middle of the boardwalk where you'll see a lighthouse, then walk to the right. Enjoy the variety of typical Mexican and international restaurants, craft shops, modern art galleries, and silver shops. Return to the lighthouse and enter to visit a 1 200 gallon aquarium featuring fish from the Pacific ocean and all over the world. Part of the proceeds from your entrance fee are used for a conservation program for whales and turtles. Upon exiting, continue north; go to the Swiss Deli to buy luscious sweets or homemade bread, or try a delicious Italian ice cream. There are more restaurants ahead; including Argentine, Mexican, Italian and excellent seafood. The boardwalk is a great place to stroll, see and be seen, watch the children at play, have a family outing, or just admire the spectacular yachts that are moored here and feel the marine spirit. At night, the lights and music coming from the restaurants create a festive ambiance. On several Friday evenings, the art galleries sponsor a cultural event. Check the local newspapers for times of scheduled events and openings.



M. C.



M. C.

Ecotourism tours

*It is remarkable that the first official records of ecology of **Bahía de Banderas**, were recorded in the diary of Elisa Azelia Grizwold Williams, the wife of the captain of the whaler Florida in 1861. In it she describes sighting humpback whales, orcas, gray whales and lots of sharks. She also writes of the abundant sea bird life, especially ducks, beautiful lush woods and wonderful fruits and vegetables.*

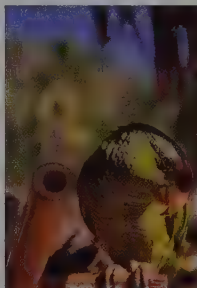
Exploring: in Vallarta there is everything from beautiful little outings to more rigorous adventures. It totally depends upon your physical condition. Ask your guide what to take, for example, sunscreen 15 SPF, a cap, a visor, an extra shirt, a towel, a backpack, special shoes, insect repellent, bathing suit or a machete.

Nowadays, ecotourism is very popular and everyone talks about ecology, but what exactly is it? Did you know that the word ecology comes from the Greek *oikis* (home) and *logia* (study or science). Consequently, ecology is the study of the relationship between human beings and their surroundings, and the conservation of the environment. So, what is ecotourism? It means simply to visit nature (jungle, mountains, and the sea) to learn how to live in harmony with the ecosystems without causing harm or any irreparable damage.

Coincidentally, when John Huston made Puerto Vallarta famous with his filming of *The Night of the Iguana*, he promoted a vision of Vallarta's ecology, showing the whole world the jungle, palm groves, iguanas and the people—all living in harmony. (This does not necessarily pertain to the actors in his film...)



RICARDO DÍAZ BORIOI



D. R.



N. C.

► **Kayaking by sea:** enjoy the fascinating scenery while guiding your kayak along the coastline. Observe the dense tropical forest, the breathtaking scenery, the impressive variety of exotic birds.

► **Marieta Islands:** During the fifteenth century these islands were known as the Tintoques Islands. This incredible place can only be described as an exotic and unique paradise. Here you will be able to observe the colonies of marine birds that inhabit this wondrous locale. Even more, you will encounter the dolphins, the turtles, the mantas, and the thousands of multi-colored tropical fish swimming among the coral reefs. The caves and isolated beaches around these islands are most unusual. On one of the



M C

islands there is a secret beach, **La Playa del Amor**. To get to this beach one of the locals or a professional tour guide will have to share the secret. After swimming through a tunnel (low tide only) you'll find yourself on a hidden beach protected by 10 ft. (3 m) thick walls of volcanic rock. This is a very unique experience, and now you'll realize there really is magic in Vallarta.

► **Bird watching and nature walks:** There are many different and incredible walks through the jungle and the mountain range to choose from. Moreover, 170 species of birds live in their natural habitat in Puerto Vallarta's tropical forests. There is also an enticing tour to the **Laguna Quelele** to watch the birds in their natural environment.

It is almost impossible to mention all the walks available in the Sierra Madre, so only a few will be highlighted. The tour to the **Cerro del Guindiri** is an easy walk, where you will be able to admire lots of luxuriant plants, orchids, rivers and waterfalls. Another stimulating walk is to the **Cerro del Mono**, although is for the more advanced or experienced hiker. You will walk through the jungle and mountains until you reach the top, where you will be fascinated by the view of the bay and islands. The **Edén waterfalls** are for the adventurer in good physical condition. The vegetation on the trail is quite spectacular. The waterfalls are sensational. You can also access these cascades by horse or in a jeep. There is a tourist restaurant in the area.



RICARDO DÍAZ BORJOLI



RICARDO DÍAZ BORJOLI



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► **La Tovar Springs:** has different species of snowy egrets and turtles, orchids, and crystal clear springs, truly another magical place. As you travel via small boat on the Tovar, through a side channel that winds into the jungle river that quickly narrows into a dark tree tunnel and a complex of twists and turns, you will be dazzled by the parrots and various birds singing overhead while herons soar, specially at sunset. The turtles swim among fish of a hundred different colors, and the green jungle is reflected in the water. At times you may see an alligator or a leaping jaguar. Finally you arrive at the Tovar Springs, which swells up from the base of a tropical cliff side. At the end of the trip, you'll get to a beach where the turtle eggs are released during the season. Another great place is **La Presa del Cajón de Peña.** It is a naturally beautiful refuge for macaws, parrots, and parakeets. Here you will see a colorful mixture of friendly birds, wild badgers, wild pigs, and jaguars. As you can see, there is something for everyone.

► **Whale watching:** (December to March.) The humpback whales come each winter to mate and calve their young. They come every year from the North Pole to Vallarta—over 6 250 miles (10 000 km). They are not the largest whales, but their



J W

length of about 58 ft. (18 m), and their weight of 45 tons is impressive enough. The heart of a whale weighs 440 pounds –200 kg. Suddenly you might see a big splash and these mammoth creatures in all their glory can appear right before your eyes. This is an unforgettable experience, and an extraordinary opportunity to experience their behavior as they swim, dive, and breach close to you.

► **Turtle nesting camp:** (*July to November.*) You'll get to know different species of turtles that live in the Pacific. It's wondrous to observe the miracle of nesting while patrolling the beach with special guides. You can also visit the camps where the eggs are kept until they hatch and are released. This is an unforgettable experience with nature. (*1-4 days.*)

► **Dolphins:** soon they will open a tank in a natural pool in Nuevo Vallarta. There will be five dolphins of the *Tursiops Truncatus* species from the Sinaloa region. They will offer classes about the dolphins and their interaction with humans. You will be able to swim along with these great animals.

► **Terra Noble:** is one of those rare places that seems to have come from another world or some other era; it is another secret of Vallarta, even though it has been written about in Architectural Digest. Terra Noble is an specialized center for pre-Hispanic art and other artistic ramifications, as well as a spiritual center. Terra Noble was built entirely of elements from nature. The place itself transports your imagination into a world of peace, an encounter with one's self and the magic of rediscovering nature. Here you can work with clay just as the ancient Indians did, become acquainted with the elements of the earth, make tortillas just as it was done in the pre-Hispanic era; all this taking place in an ecological reserve with an unparalleled view of the bay and northern Vallarta. You can also enjoy an Aztec steam bath, meditation classes, Tai Chi, therapy, and numerous treatments for health and beauty.



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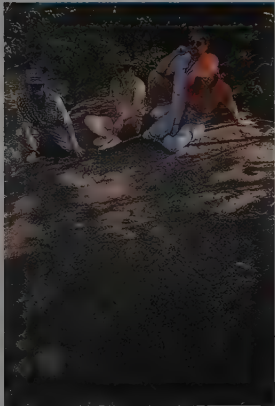
Adventure tours

My personal recommendations for those that love challenging adventures is to contact professional guides. Sometimes the safety rules in Mexico are more flexible than in other countries.

In Vallarta you can visit some magical places, sites of glorious pre-Hispanic history, which will leave you enthralled. Some of these may not open to the public, and require guides for two reasons. Some of the tours are very challenging, and others are to places only known by the guides. Also, they try to protect the areas against damage and looting.

► **Piedra de la Primavera: 1 day, easy.** It is as interesting to find this stone carved with ancient petroglyphics, as it is to see it. The only access we know is via the road to Las Palmas, to the north of Puerto Vallarta. On the winding road you will see glorious vegetation, red colored romelias, and orchids hanging from immense trees. The road is sometimes laborious –2 hours. At stop is required for the guide to ask permission from don José to enter his ranch where the rock is. Then, Mr. Ramón Cabrera will guide you to a corn field. You will enter without being able to see anything but corn stalks. Suddenly Ramón will exclaim, "Here we are". **Pulling the corn stalks aside, a magnificent rock will appear, covered with petroglyphics and broken in two parts over time.** The first view of these petroglyphics inspire reverence. Imagine being able to admire today the work of a pre-Hispanic civilization hundreds of years later! Returning to the path Ramón points to what is supposedly left of the Indian homes, and to the ground –where amazingly, you'll find Indian artifacts and broken figurines.





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► **Piedra del Patolli:**
2 hours, easy
The Patolli is a huge stone with petroglyphics which is believed to be from the Aztatlán culture (600-1000 A.C.)

It is considered to be one of the most important pre-Hispanic finds in this area. It was discovered in June,

1977. Among the engravings on the rock, according to Edward B. Taylor, one resembles a game similar to *parcheesi*, (from India -1879), and perhaps there is a connection. Apparently, the Indians of Tomatlán played Patolli, and it might have had some religious and a calendaric significance. Unfortunately, the engraving of the game is faint, but you can admire other engravings, including one that appears to be a Guacamaya bird. Access to the rock is by scaling it from behind and climbing over it, which at the same contributes to wear away the remaining petroglyphics. For this reason, its exact whereabouts have not been publicly revealed. This is done to help preserve its location, and as a guard against premature deterioration. For this trip, you need a guide who knows the area around **El Tuito** and has the official authorization to go in. If this rock really intrigues you, seek information at the Setujal Tourism Office.



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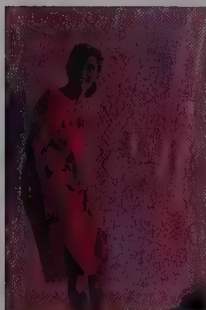
► **The Waterfalls of Mismaloya:** *10-12 hours, challenging.* The best way to describe these falls is the phrase, "God is here. You are close to God". Entering the steep path on horse or on foot is like entering another world. It starts near El Edén. The exuberant jungle is dense; parrots and hawks fly overhead, and the humid smell of the jungle is intense. Halfway up, bromelias appear in vibrant tones of red, and pine trees and animal tracks can be seen on the trail. After an hour into the climb at 3 950 ft. (1 200 m) it is time to stop and admire a spectacular view of Mismaloya. Continue about 1 000 ft. (300 m) higher to a lookout point, where the view will take your breath away. The most spectacular scenery of Bahía de Banderas appears at your feet. Then the descent to the valley starts and continues on for about 2 hours. The roar of the waterfall begins, and the first waterfall **Blanca** shows itself to let you know that you're not far away. The river is crossed several times and then, finally, the first swimming pool is right there. Suddenly, you forget being tired, and just jump in the water... and you want more.

The waterfalls of Mismaloya are altogether seven cascades with a drop of about 1 980 m. The one that has the easiest access is **Blanca**, although the path is precipitous and it requires non slippery shoes and machetes. The second one is for the daring type, and the remaining ones are for the really intrepid. To get all the way here, the trail is arduous. It takes around *three hours on horseback, plus three hours to return.* To walk, figure eight hours, four coming and four going; either way, you must go with a professional guide. This is one of the most unforgettable adventures.

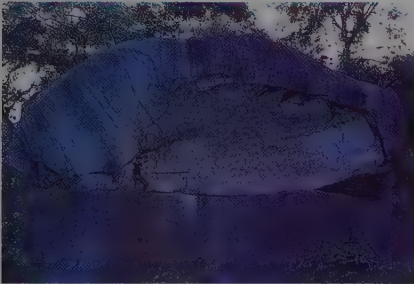
► **Rupestrian Cave Painting:** *one day, rigorous.* The ideal trip is combining a boat ride by the dam "El Cajón de la Peña" and continue for a 3 mile (5 km) walk to a cliff, where the rupestrian cave is. This amazing painting is hidden underneath a craggy rock, at a crack emerging on top of a precipice overlooking a river. You'll walk



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end of the crack, to admire the 10 ft. (3 m) of red petroglyphs in the rock. It is fascinating! You'll see them on the wall behind and on the roof. Many questions come to your mind. How did they do it to last so many centuries? Why did they choose this concealed place? No easy explanation comes to mind. But, what you do know, is that the emotion of being there is incredible. At first, there is admiration for being able to cherish centuries of old history. A feeling of peace takes over, you don't want to move, as there is some kind of sorcery; the precipice is no longer intimidating. Finally, you'll decide to go downhill, sliding from the rocks until you reach the river. From down on the river, you can still see the painting. After the adventure, the river invites you for a swim. The help of professional guides and the use of climbing ropes are required to be safe.



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Different tours

► **Caleta beach:** is where John Huston found his paradise, hidden from the world. Recently, this beach, blanketed by lush jungle, has become a fantasy that will transport visitors into the heart of nature; simple, rustic and romantic. His home is preserved in its original location and a recognized botanist designed the garden featuring thousands of plants and trees of the region.

During the day it will become an escape from modern civilization, a place to meditate, rest, or practice yoga while soothed by sounds of the sea and mountains. If you are looking for something more active, you can explore the surroundings in a kayak or just go snorkel. (Be sure to visit the bathrooms as they are most interesting.)

Arriving at night by boat, everything seems totally surreal. Illuminated by 230 torches and over 300 candles-there is no electricity, you will hear the beating of drums in the distance. When you arrive, the feeling is that you are entering into another era. The magic takes over! After looking around a bit, a romantic dinner is served. Later, a lively floor show is presented in a natural amphitheater. It features music and dances of pre-Hispanic, Mexican and Latin American variety. This tour is called Rhythms of the Night.

► **Trip to the Valentina Ranch:** is a great way to experience Mexican traditions in a simple, warm, homey atmosphere. The trip begins at the church in El Pitillal and continues on to a rustic brick factory. Arriving at the ranch, they will acquaint you with the horses and take you for a ride around the area. Upon returning, you'll learn about all kinds of cactuses, including the **agave azul**, and "how to drink tequila the Mexican way".





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Afterward, they'll teach you to grind corn, make a tortilla and roast it on the fire. (Be careful not to burn yourself.) Other activities teach you about the tradition of *piñatas*, along with Mexican dances presented by the Urrutia family whose youngest performer is only three! There is also a fantastic horse that dances to Latin rhythms, followed by a Mexican dinner. Be aware that it is a simple place, where there could be oversights. You should also dress appropriately for a ranch.

► **Chicos Paradise:** 2 hours. It is on the road just south of Boca de Tomatlán. More than an adventure this is also a delightful and tranquil spot, very popular with the tourists. It is right on the river, surrounded by small cascades, pools and natural forming whirlpools among gigantic rocks and boulders. There is a rustic and quaint restaurant and a handi-craft store. If you want to go just to swim, you must enter through the restaurant and take the steep stairs to the left, and go down to the river. During the rainy season, the force of the river water can make it quite dangerous, creating underwater currents that can pull you down, so be on the lookout when you swim.



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Guadalajara, Jalisco

Place near by

Is known as the land of the tequila, of the **mariachis**, of the **charros** and of beautiful women.

► **Guadalajara yesterday and today:** Guadalajara, capital of the state of Jalisco, recognized as "The Occident Pearl" was established in 1542 over the valley of Atemajac at 5 072 ft. (1 542 m). It was intended to be the capital of Nueva Galicia and today is the second most important city in Mexico. It has an ideal climate, warm and pleasant, which has contributed to its development. Guadalajara, despite its modern facilities and advanced technology, still has retained a charming atmosphere of past tradition.

Guadalajara has had an incredible succession of cultural flourishings since the age of the grand *tapatíos* such as: **José Clemente Orozco**, **Juan Rulfo**, and **Agustín Yáñez**. Today, new talent continues to evolve among poets, narrators, filmmakers, architects and painters continuing the cultural development of the city. It is estimated that nowadays there are at least more than 300 young writers in Guadalajara. Poet Rafael Torres Sánchez wrote: "*There must be something in the water or climate of Guadalajara to create so many poets*".

► **How to get there:** Guadalajara is 25 minutes by air, 5 hours by bus, or 4 by car from Vallarta. You can plan your own trip, take a *1-day tour* or a *7-day excursion*. The ideal is to stay at least two days, time permitting. If you choose to drive, you should be aware that the first two hours is over a winding road in fair condition, but the last two hours are on the marvelous Maxipista highway; which charges a toll of about \$150 pesos each way, but it is worth it because you save three to four hours of a curving highway. Do not drive at night, there are animals and children playing in the road and no lights along the way.

► **Touring:** In this fabulous city you will find culture, fun, good food, tequila and marvelous hosts, *los tapatíos* —as residents of Guadalajara are called. Their city is a premier tourist attraction.

► **One day tour:** In the morning, visit the Historical Center, La Cruz de Plazas, the Government Palace, the Cathedral and Degollado Theater. In the afternoon go to Tlaquepaque to shop or sightsee.

► **Two day tour:** Visit San Pedro Tlaquepaque and Tonalá for excellent shopping.

Sites to see

► **The Cathedral:** is the center of the "Cruz de Plazas" a cross shaped by four squares at the historical downtown. The first stone was laid in 1558 and it took 60 years to build. **The Cathedral is the symbol of this *tapatía* city.** Once inside, notice the three towers with arches featuring fine molding, then continue to the sacristy. Here you can admire a painting of the Immaculate Conception by the Spanish artist Murillo. Hours are from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm.

► **La Cruz de Plazas:** is formed by four squares which resemble a cross and surrounds the interesting sites in the Historical Center:

► **La Plaza de los Laureles:** beautifully frames the exterior of the Cathedral with its large fountain surrounded by laurel trees. This site commemorates the founding of the city.

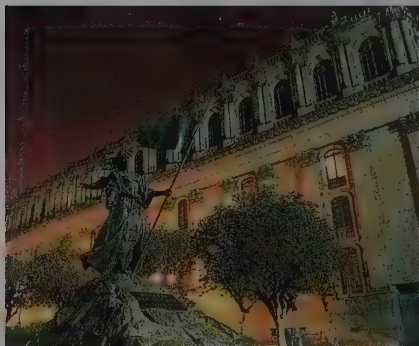
► **La Plaza de Armas:** is between the Government Palace and the Cathedral. Its most striking feature is a beautiful *gazebo* in the center which was built in Paris at the beginning of this century.

► **La Plaza de la Liberación:** is in front of the Degollado Theater. It is the largest of the four squares as well as the most modern which differentiate it from the other three squares.

► **La Rotonda de los Hombres Ilustres:** is between the Cathedral and the Regional Museum. It was built to honor the men who have made Guadalajara the prosperous city it is. This is a perfect place to sit on a bench beneath a shady tree and rest.



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► **El Teatro Degollado:** this beautiful theater was built midway through the 19th century. In 1961, the facade was refurbished with a unique sculpted work of Mexican stone *cantera*. In front pay attention to the 16 Corinthian columns that were styled after the Pantheon of Agripa in Rome. Behind the theater is a statue of the popular Father Hidalgo, breaking the chains of slavery.

It commemorates the decree signed in Guadalajara in 1810.

► **El Palacio de Gobierno:** is the Government Palace located between the Plaza de Armas and the Plaza de la Liberación. Built in the 18th century, it has since been refurbished in keeping with the original design. Much history has taken place here, including the abolition of slavery, and the end of the independence movement initiated by Father Hidalgo in Dolores. One of Mexico's finest murals, painted by the illustrious Jose Clemente Orozco can be seen here.

► **El Instituto Cultural Cabañas:** This cultural center is situated behind the Degollado Theater in the **Plaza Tapatía**. The Cabañas was founded as an orphanage in 1845 by Bishop Juan Ruiz de Cabañas y Crespo and has become a place for an extraordinary diversity of all sort of cultural activities. At the Cabañas one can enjoy a classical performance as well as a lively rock concert!

Shopping, shopping

Guadalajara is the ideal place to shop! You'll find everything from exclusive crafts, traditional Mexican embroidered dresses, unique silver jewelry design, wood carved furniture, handmade fabrics to major modern shopping centers. Mexico's most important pottery industry is located here, deriving its influence from the mixture of the Indian and Spanish heritage. There is a permanent exhibition of an immense variety of crafts in the **Instituto de la Artesanía Jalisciense**, located in Parque Agua Azul.

Every Sunday, the Ballet Folklórico performs in the theater. This outstanding dance group is a must to see! Purchase tickets the day before at the theater box office. Open 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM.

If you like José Clemente Orozco see his famous mural, *Man in Flames*, painted in 1939. There are also other permanent exhibits as well. **The Cabañas** itself offers a beautiful spectacle of lights and shadows. Open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

If you are short on time, go directly to the *Libertad Market*, one block east of the Hospice. It is the biggest market in Mexico, perhaps even in the world. Open daily from 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM.

places to buy pottery are outside the city in either **Tlaquepaque** or **Tonalá**. Prices are higher than the market – **Mercado Libertad**, but still cheaper than in most of the stores and galleries.



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Tours

Be sure to visit *Nuevos Talleres Sermel* at Cuahutemoc #322 or *Trapiche* on Ave. Tonal #269. Both the prices and designs of these paper mache pieces are exceptional.

► Tonalá: The village of Tonalá is 18 km from Guadalajara, via Hwy 80 or Ave. Lázaro Cárdenas. You'll have to pass Tlaquepaque and continue on for about 10 minutes until you get to a circle and follow the signs. It's fun to go on Thursdays or Sundays because crafts are sold in the streets (called *tianguis de artesanías* or street markets). All shops are open daily, but they close during lunch hours.

You can buy handmade pieces that are works of art due to the skill of the potters, and so unique that you won't find better workmanship anywhere. The pottery of Tonalá has roots in pre-Columbian times, and carries on that style and tradition. Crafts of paper mache in all styles and designs are a specialty here.



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► **San Pedro Tlaquepaque:** Located about 8 kilometers from the city, it will take about 30 minutes to reach by car. Take Ave. Lázaro Cárdenas. As soon as you reach a sign indicating the airport, get immediately off on the side road. After passing the airport exit, you must turn right at once, at González Gallo, then go around the circle to the right and take the second right, this is Niños Héroes. Stay on until the Tlaquepaque sign, where you'll be making a right turn at Juárez. Tlaquepaque is a pottery center of great tradition. Most of the townspeople work with clay, using techniques handed down through generations. **This is a great place to buy all kinds of crafts at good prices,** which are slightly higher than those of Tonalá, but still a bargain.



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Practical information

► **Tourism Office:** Degollado #50, ☎ 614-8371. Open Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

► **From the airport to town:** to go quickly and comfortably, buy a ticket outside the terminal for a *combi* (these are vans). Taxis are very reasonable \$40 to \$50 pesos.

► **Urban transportation:** Guadalajara is a big city, but even though the distances are long, the **taxi** rates are considered moderate. Some taxi drivers display an official list of prices, depending upon distances, in their cabs, but it is always better to ask before getting in. Just ask *¿cuánto cobra?* (how much?). It is very reasonable to hire a taxi for a few hours. If you are on a budget, it is better to take **buses** or a van called **colectivo**, which has a capacity for 10 passengers. They take the same routes as the buses but they cost a few pesos more because they are much faster than a bus and smaller.

Tequila

5 hours

The town of Tequila is located 57 km from Guadalajara, (three hours from Puerto Vallarta and one hour from Guadalajara). It is on the Tepic to Guadalajara Maxipista. When you see miles and miles of blue agave cactus (also called *maguey*) on both sides of the road, then you'll be very close to the town of Tequila.

This famous Mexican drink is obtained by extracting the **aguamiel or the honey from the heart of the maguey**. The maguey was the plant used by the Indians to produce an intoxicating drink known as the *octli*. When the Spaniards arrived they called it *pulque*.

There isn't much information regarding the origins of these distilled drinks. The first data available appeared about the time of the Spanish conquest. Some say that the Indians learned how to roast the heart of the maguey plant and fermented the juice in Amatitlán, Jalisco.

In 1875, The Medical Society of London issued a report saying, "Mexican tequila, when drunk in moderation, can be a powerful aid to purify the blood, stimulate the digestive system, and it is recommended to improve the appetite...". Be careful though, don't go crazy drinking tequila in Vallarta; remember the report said "in moderation".

Ever since 1795, the King of Spain gave consent to the conquerors to make and sell tequila. Juan Sánchez de Tagle was the first to establish a modern tequila distillery. Later, Cenobio Sauza started to mass produce tequila, and he was the first to export it to the United States. The rest is history.





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► **Origin of the tequila name:** No one knows for sure the origin of the name, but one of the versions is found in the *Spanish Chronicles of the Conquest* by Bernal Díaz del Castillo, official historian of the conquest. He wrote: "The Indians from Jalisco learned from the Huichol Indians how to burn the cactus leaf of the maguey plant". This was the first step in the production of the mezcal drink. These Indians were known as the Tequila tribe, and since they were the first to learn how to produce it, the drink was named tequila, pronounced "to kill ya"!

► **The tequila process of distillation:** The tequila is extracted from the maguey plant, also known as *Agave Tequiliana* or Blue Mezcal. The plant needs to grow for 8 to 12 years in order to attain optimum maturity. The sword-like fronds are stripped from the plant exposing the heart (which looks like a big pineapple). The heart is cooked in huge copper kettles until the starch turns to sugar, and the juice is fermented. The sugar and the agave mature into alcohol, breaking into small pieces as they are sterilized in giant autoclaves. This process is repeated several times and eventually diluted to reach the desired strength. Then the tequila passes through quality control, and is then ready to drink and enjoy. The tequila has a 40% alcohol content.

► **Sightseeing:** includes a visit to one of the two big distilleries **Sauza** or **Cuervo**. You'll visit an old hacienda from the XVIII century, where you will be told about the process of the *aguamiel* fermentation, shown how they take the heart of the maguey, and the process of distillation. A sample taste is offered of the standard (non-aged) clear tequila versus the well aged tequila gold. Don't forget to admire the mural at Sauza factory showing the history of the tequila.

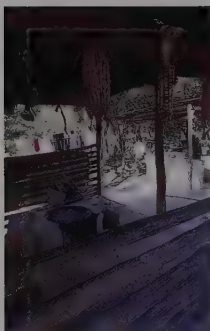
While sightseeing along the road you'll see kiosks selling all kinds of tequilas in small barrels made out of red wood decorated with figures and shapes, or amphoras covered with pig leather and inscribed with popular witty phrases, and an incredible variety of mezcal. If you look hard, you'll be able to find excellent tequila and brands that are impossible to find anywhere else. The prices are good, and you can bargain; don't leave without trying the apricot mezcal.

San Sebastián del Oeste

2 days



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► **San Sebastián yesterday:** Centuries ago, a Náhuatl-Aztec tribe of indigenous natives lived at the head of San Sebastián, a small valley beneath the towering peak of La Bufa. It was the hub of the chiefdom of Ostoticpac, which translates "hollow in the highlands". They were known as the Texoquines, and they worshipped the gods of fertility and sun. They grew a variety of subsistence crops using the rich volcanic soil, abundant sunshine, and reliable rainfall. But what gave San Sebastián a unique blessing were the plentiful resources of silver and gold, of which the natives made practical and artistic use. These resources were a mixed blessing because they attracted the attention of the Spaniards who in the mid 1800's were making their way from inland to the coast. The mines of San Sebastián became an important cog in the development of New Spain.

A few grand haciendas and a classic, modestly proportioned colonial town evolved and flourished before the inevitable depletion of mineral reserves halted the growth. At its apogee, it was home to more than 30 000 inhabitants. But boom was not followed by bust; its idyllic setting and its own intrinsic natural wealth guaranteed San Sebastián's survival. Those who stayed did so because they had all that they required and wanted nothing more.

► **Getting there:** As the crow and the DC-3 fly, San Sebastián del Oeste is only about 40 km and 15 minutes from Vallarta. However, by car, that same distance translates into a reasonably grueling adventure; an uphill bus ride of two hours or more. Whichever way you choose to travel, the time and the money will be well worth it.



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► **The scenic road:** curves north before heading inland to Las Palmas. This is the end of the paved road, and the beginning of the adventure. The road is rough, but the drive can be done in almost any vehicle as long as it is strong and well suspended. But in the wet months of summer (*July-October*), the road is virtually impassable.

► **San Sebastián today:** has a population of about 600. It has three hotels, one public restaurant, and a general store. It's a case of less is best, for its attraction lies in its simplicity and serenity, lack of neon and noise, or minimum traffic and tourism.

The beautiful town square serves as the social focal point and is the scene of the regular evening promenade by young and old. The local tienda dispenses cold beer and warm conversation. The youths amuse themselves on the basketball court. Donkeys laden with corn clip-clop down the lane. The church bells call the faithful to evening service.

Around town there are many walking paths, horse trails, and a few dirt roads leading to some of the surrounding *pueblitos* and vantage points. The most spectacular of the neighboring peaks is that of La Bufo, accessible by car, foot, or horse. At 8 400 ft. (2 760 m) the view it commands of the sierras and the coast is splendid.

San Sebastián del Oeste is an ideal romantic retreat for a rural, simple, placid weekend (or longer holiday) taking your back to the old peaceful colonial times.

► **Accommodations:** You'll have a few but excellent choices of accommodations. Two hotels right on the plaza offer simple rooms around courtyard settings. **El Pabellón**, built in 1852, is charming, sunny and very reasonably priced. **Los Arcos** at the other end of the square, is similarly quaint and even more basic. Just outside of town not far from the grass airstrip in a serene setting between hills is the stately old **Hacienda Jalisco**. This caters to those seeking privacy and a standard of luxury without ostentation. They take pride in always providing lavish meals lovingly prepared from only the freshest local produce.



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Where to eat

The dining experience in Vallarta is varied in its quality and price. You'll find the finest to the simplest food. To mention every restaurant would be a book in itself. Listed here in various classifications are the opinions of vallartenses, tourists and foreign residents. We would like to point out that every month new restaurants open and others close. The information that follows is about the restaurants that were open at the time of publication. They are listed in alphabetical order.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Adobe \$\$\$

innovative Mexican menu, casually chic, southwestern ambiance • page 58

Abadia Basso \$\$\$

old style Mexican dishes, cozy, intimate, small, great selection of wines • page 57

Cafe Des Artistes \$\$\$\$

award winning French chef, nouvelle cuisine experience, trendy, sophisticated • page 57

Café Maximilian \$\$\$

wonderful European sidewalk cafe, great nouvelle Austrian-Mexican cuisine • page 59

Chef Roger \$\$\$\$

award winning Swiss chef, remarkable Mexican-European menu. Patio setting • page 57

Daiquiri Dick's \$\$\$

beach site, famous for the fish on the stick, Mexican-California style • page 59

Garibaldi \$\$\$

wonderful fish dishes and more than 140 types of tequila • page 60

Le Gourmet \$\$\$

everything is flambé in a friendly Mexican atmosphere with mariachis • page 58

Los Pibes \$\$\$

excellent beef, old fashioned Argentinean style menu • page 58

Lunatics \$\$

something for everyone, charming, friendly, small • page 58

Mariscos Tino's \$\$

shrimps and mesquite grilled fish are delicious, simple • page 60

Mikado \$\$\$\$

wonderful Japanese cuisine, peaceful atmosphere • page 60

Papaya \$

healthy food, attractively served, home made, friendly, small • page 57

Pipi's \$\$

really incredible fajitas, "American style", colorful • page 57

Tampico \$\$\$

specializing in fish with unusual seasonings, great pasta • page 57

Cafe Primitivo \$

secluded, rustic hideaway, lovely sunsets • page 59

El Palomar De Los

González \$\$\$

sit outside on the terrace, really romantic view of the bay. Juan is a great host • page 59

La Palapa \$\$\$

candlelight dinner, outside, on the beach • page 59

La Quebrada \$

a romantic treasure, take out-of towners for a drink • page 59

Le Bistro \$\$\$

the delicate, delicious food and intimate river view make this a consistent winner • page 58

El Set \$\$

intimate, spectacular sunsets • page 59

Mr. Pepe's \$\$\$\$

great view for a great romance, live music. Check menu prices • page 58

Panorama \$\$\$

breathtaking panoramic view of the bay, flambé is the style • page 57

THE MOST ROMANTIC

Bombo's \$\$\$

a perfect sunset view, quietly romantic • page 57

Bogarts \$\$\$\$

dream style decor, meals are long, slow and memorable • page 60

LOCAL FAVORITES

Archies Wok \$\$
dependable Philippine-Thai
menu ♣ page 59

Balam \$\$\$
freshest fish Mexican style
♣ page 58

Café De Olla \$
solid, simple Mexican menu
♣ page 58

Da Franco \$\$
Italian homemade cuisine
♣ page 59

Dolce Vita \$\$
Italian, vibrant, fun
♣ page 58

El Dorado \$\$
popular seafood, sit outside
♣ page 59

La Hacienda \$\$
distinctive, traditional
Mexican style. This is a real
hacienda ♣ page 58

Las Palomas \$\$\$
very popular, killer
margaritas. Great for people
watching ♣ page 58

Las Ocho Tostadas \$
this is the place for wonder-
ful tostadas, seafood cock-
tails ♣ page 60

Memo's Pancake House \$\$
favored among tourists for
breakfast ♣ page 59

Palacio Oriental \$\$
sentimental favorite, for
Chinese ♣ page 58

Pietros \$
solid, dependable Italian
menu. Dine with the church
bells ♣ page 57

Rito's Bacci \$\$
very popular, *molto bene*
Italian ♣ page 58

Tuti Fruti \$
the best *tortas* (Mexican
sandwiches) around, friendly,
stools to sit ♣ page 60

The restaurants

The quantity and variety is extensive. The choice is yours. Be aware that some restaurants close during the summer season (August-September). The following list is the result of an independent survey of the selections available. None of the parties involved have received any gratuities, or discounts in order to receive a favorable comment.

VEGETARIAN

Papaya 3 \$
great juices and soup
☎ 2 03 03
Abasolo 169

Vegetariano 100% \$
great variety for the price
☎ 2 30 73
Iturbide 270

FRENCH

Café Des Artistes \$\$\$\$
exquisite, artistic, chic
☎ 2 32 28
G. Sánchez 740

ITALIAN

Il Mangiare \$\$
homemade
☎ 2 64 96
Abasolo & Morelos

Pane Vino \$\$
by the cathedral, cozy
Independencia 225

Pietros \$
local favorite, dependable
☎ 2 32 33
Zaragoza 245

DOWNTOWN

MEXICAN

Abadia Basso \$\$\$
intimate, delicious
☎ 3 13 74
Hidalgo 224

Bombo's \$\$\$
exotic seafood, view
☎ 2 51 64
Miramar 563

Chef Roger \$\$\$\$
extraordinary, romantic
☎ 2 59 00
Rodríguez 267

Chez Elena \$\$
tranquil, picturesque
☎ 2 01 61
Matamoros .520

Keeke's \$\$

smashing shrimps
☎ 2 10 16
Dominguez 211

La Casita \$\$\$
pleasant, hillside view
☎ 2 26 60
Panamá 387

Panorama \$\$\$
breathtaking view
☎ 2 18 18
Hotel La Siesta

Pipi's \$\$
superb fajitas, popular
Pípila / Sánchez

Tampico \$\$\$
phenomenal seasonings
☎ 2 28 11
Galeana 180

Rito's Bacci \$\$

delicious home made
 ☎ 2 64 48
 Dominguez 181

Tutto Mare \$\$

extensive seafood menu
 ☎ 3 12 81
 Zaragoza 120

AMERICAN**La Cave \$\$**

piano jazz
 ☎ 2 47 90
 Hidalgo 113

Planet Hollywood \$\$\$

American-Mexican version
 ☎ 3 27 02
 Morelos 518

MALECÓN**MEXICAN****Carlos O'Brian's \$\$**

jumping bar scene, fun
 ☎ 2 14 44
 Díaz Ordaz 786

La Chata \$\$

extensive folkloric menu
 ☎ 3 16 84
 Díaz Ordaz 708

Las Palomas \$\$\$

popular, good margaritas
 ☎ 2 36 75
 Díaz Ordaz 594

Mogambo \$\$

exotic decor, jazz
 ☎ 2 64 96
 Morelos 635

Tequila's \$\$

mariachi music
 ☎ 2 27 33
 Galeana 104

Zapatas \$\$

folkloric group
 ☎ 2 47 48
 Díaz Ordaz 524

ITALIAN**Dolce Vita \$\$**

great lasagna, ocean view
 ☎ 2 38 52
 Díaz Ordaz 674

AMERICAN**California \$**

American cafeteria style
 ☎ 3 15 23
 Díaz Ordaz 126

Hard Rock \$\$

singles scene, live music
 ☎ 2 55 32
 Díaz Ordaz 652

No Name Café \$\$

sports bar, active
 ☎ 3 25 08
 Morelos 460

RIVERSIDE**INTERNATIONAL****Cuiza \$\$\$**

casually elegant ambiance
 ☎ 2 56 46
 Isla Río Cuale #3

La Fuente del Puente \$

river view
 ☎ 2 11 41
 Insurgentes 107

Le Bistro \$\$\$

romantic, jazz, superb
 ☎ 2 02 83
 Río Cuale

SOUTH OF THE RIVER**MEXICAN****El Tucán \$\$**

lovely garden
 ☎ 2 07 78
 Vallarta 322

La Hacienda \$\$

popular old hacienda style
 ☎ 2 05 90
 Aguacate 274

Le Gourmet \$\$\$

delectable flambé menu
 ☎ 2 09 14
 Serdán 242

Los Arbolitos \$\$

off the beaten path
 ☎ 2 47 25
 Camino Rivera

Mr. Pepes \$\$\$\$

tasty, great view of town
 ☎ 2 27 32
 Basilio Badillo 518

Lunatics \$\$

warm, friendly
 ☎ 2 61 42
 Vallarta 179

Red Cabbage \$

bohemian hideaway
 ☎ 3 04 11
 Riv. del Río 204

Sr. Chico's \$\$

dazzling view of town
 ☎ 2 35 70
 Pulpito 377

ASIAN**Red Dragon \$**

no frills Cantonese
 ☎ 2 01 75
 Insurgentes 323

Palacio Oriental \$

Chinese, local favorite
 ☎ 2 05 80
 Cárdenas 302

Sushinomi \$\$

unsophisticated but good
 Cárdenas 179

AMERICAN**Rosies Garden \$\$**

gringo fix
 & 2 43 85
 Molino de Agua Hotel

RESTAURANT ROW**MEXICAN****Adobe \$\$\$**

trendy, casual, delicious
 ☎ 2 67 20
 Basilio Badillo 252

Balam \$\$\$

good seafood
 ☎ 2 34 51
 Basilio Badillo 425

Café de Olla \$

popular, appetizing
 ☎ 3 16 26
 Basilio Badillo 168

Las Cazuelas \$\$

home cooking
 ☎ 2 16 58
 Basilio Badillo 479

Los Laureles \$\$

innovative cuisine
 ☎ 2 02 56
 Basilio Badillo 286

ARGENTINIAN**Los Pibes \$\$\$**

prime beef, extensive menu
 ☎ 3 15 57
 Basilio Badillo 261
 and Marina

FRENCH**Café Olé \$\$\$\$**

first class, great daiquiris
 ☎ 2 28 77
 Basilio Badillo 283

GERMAN

Frankfort \$\$

out of sight garden
 ☎ 2 34 03
 Basilio Badillo 300

THAI

The Blue Elephant \$\$\$

only Thai in town
 ☎ 2 28 77
 Basilio Badillo 287

AMERICAN

Memo's Pancake

House \$\$

breakfast American style
 ☎ 2 62 72
 Basilio Badillo 289

PLAYA LOS MUERTOS

MEXICAN

Ándale \$\$

very popular, crowded
 ☎ 2 10 54
 Olas Altas 425

Buenos Vientos \$\$

charming, serene
 ☎ 2 05 05
 Olas Altas 391

El Dorado \$\$

beach, seafood
 ☎ 2 15 11
 Pulpito 102

La Palapa \$\$\$

beach, romantic, good music
 ☎ 2 52 25
 Pulpito 103

Langostinos \$\$

beach, tasteful seafood
 ☎ 2 08 94
 M. Diéguez 109

Santos \$\$

original recipes, intimate
 ☎ 2 56 70
 Rodríguez

Talulas \$\$

delectable flambé
 ☎ 2 09 12
 Amapas 214

Nanahuatzin \$\$\$

beach, good black bean soup
 Olas Altas 336

AUSTRIAN

Café Maximilian \$\$\$

superb, sidewalk cafe
 ☎ 3 07 60
 Olas Altas 380-B

GREEK

Bravo \$\$

appetizing, quaint, friendly
 ☎ 3 15 62
 R. Gómez

ITALIAN

Chianti's \$

sidewalk terrace
 Olas Altas 509

Da Franco \$\$

outdoor, popular
 ☎ 2 46 65
 C. Alegre 16

PHILIPPINE

Archie's Wok \$\$

top of the line lite menu
 ☎ 2 04 11
 Rodríguez 130

AMERICAN

Daiquiri Dick's \$\$\$

top notch California style cuisine
 ☎ 2 05 66
 Olas Altas 314

Chiles \$

informal, relaxed, dependable
 ☎ 3 03 73
 Pulpito 122

SOUTH

MEXICAN

El Palomar de los

González \$\$\$

breathtaking view
 ☎ 2 07 95
 Aguacate 425

El Set \$\$\$

beautiful sunsets
 ☎ 1 53 42
 Hwy 200, km 2.5

Felipes \$\$

city lights at night
 ☎ 2 45 99
 Insurgentes 466

BRAZILIAN

Kalua Steak \$\$

all you can eat
 ☎ 2 29 09
 Carranza 210

SOUTH-COUNTRYSIDE

Café Primitivo \$

intimate, simple, good food
 ☎ 8 00 60
 Boca de Tomatlán

Che Che \$\$\$

mesmerizing location
 ☎ 8 01 08
 Hwy 200, km 17

Le Cliff \$\$

you must see it, spectacular
 Hwy 200, km 15

Chico's Paradise \$\$\$

incredible river view
 ☎ 3 04 13
 Hwy 200, km 20

El Edén \$\$\$

tropical setting, waterfall
 Mismaloya upriver

NORTH-DOWNTOWN

MEXICAN

Misión \$\$

popular local seafood place
 ☎ 2 48 22
 México 1377

Mi Casa II \$

Mexican buffet
 ☎ 2 09 65
 México 1119

Mi Rueda \$\$

cozy, small
 ☎ 2 15 56
 Venezuela 234

NORTH-HOTEL ZONE

MEXICAN

El Andariego \$

long standing, established
 ☎ 2 09 16
 México 1358

ARGENTINIAN

Tango \$\$\$

first class beef
 ☎ 4 02 02
 Krystal Hotel

ASIAN

Kamakura \$\$\$

fresh original Asian food
 ☎ 4 02 02
 Krystal Hotel

Mikado \$\$\$\$unique *Beni Hana* style

☎ 1 00 04

Marriott Hotel

Tsunami \$\$

authentic sushi bar

☎ 4 01 05

Villa Vallarta

Shanghai \$\$

long standing favorite

☎ 4 19 62

M. Ascencio

GERMAN**Bellhaus \$\$**

ambiance

☎ 4 83 27

Plaza Genovesa

INTERNATIONAL**Bogarts \$\$\$\$**

spectacular decor

☎ 4 02 02

Krystal Hotel

NORTH-EL PITILLAL**MEXICAN****Mariscos Tino's \$\$**phenomenal seafood,
popular

☎ 4 55 84

Revolución 333

NORTH-LA MARINA**MEXICAN****Around The World \$\$**

boisterous sports bar

☎ 1 08 80

H. Plaza Iguana

Las Palomas Doradas \$\$\$

sidewalk, tasteful

☎ 1 04 70

Puesta del Sol

Sazón \$\$\$

noteworthy decor, elegant

☎ 1 06 81

Plaza Iguana

ITALIAN**Alfredo's \$\$**

outdoor, open late

☎ 1 02 62

Puesta del Sol

Andrea \$\$\$

good hotel restaurant

☎ 1 00 91

Velas Vallarta

Angela's \$\$

marina view, homemade

pasta

☎ 1 09 90

Marina del Rey

La Terraza \$\$

cozy

☎ 1 05 60

Puesta del Sol

Porto Bello \$\$\$

tasty, Marina view, terrace

☎ 1 00 03

Marina Golf

Il Padrino \$\$\$

friendly and tasty

Marina del Rey

SEAFOOD**Garibaldi \$\$\$**great fish, 140 types of
tequila

☎ 1 11 00

Westin Regina

RUSTIC FARE**Campanario \$**

great pozole

Hidalgo 99

Gabi \$

Mexican home cooking

Hidalgo 444

La Placita \$

good value

Mina 231

Tuti Fruti \$delicious *tortas*

☎ 2 10 68

Morelos & Corona

Pepé's Tacos \$

teeny tiny tacos

☎ 3 17 03

Honduras 173

Taco House \$

homemade

Vicario 139

El Fondo Patio \$

simple menu

Francia

Las Ocho Tostadas \$

terrific tostadas

☎ 4 33 18

Niza & Lucerna

El Gordo \$

carnitas

☎ 4 76 01

F. Medina 1935

Rico Mac Taco \$

tacos

☎ 2 42 04

México 1139

Pollo Feliz \$

take out

☎ 2 51 59

México & Honduras

COFFEE, ETC...**DOWNTOWN****Café Amadeus**

European tradition

Miramar

Café El Pueblitocharming, quiet, open air
Juárez 614**Café San Cristóbal**

fresh roasted coffee

Corona 172

Seattle Expressgathering for locals
Juárez 479**LOS MUERTOS****Café Lido (Ritas)**

deserts to die for

Badiño & P. Suárez

Page In The Sun

book exchange

Olas Altas

Señor Books

people watching

Olas Altas

SOUTH**Net Cafe**

open 24 hrs. cybernet

I. Vallarta

MARINA**Su Chef**

fresh bakery

Plaza Marina

Café Metalcroissants, classical music
Marina

Where to shop

Shopping shopping... if what you like to do is shop, Vallarta is a great place to be. You'll find souvenirs made of seashells, cotton clothes, leather, silver, furniture, and a tremendous variety of *artesanías* (handicrafts). Some of the shops have the finest of merchandise, others the simplest of homemade articles. There are some stores where you can bargain—specially if you are paying with cash. Other stores have fixed prices and won't come down one peso. You can always try. The main area for stores is in the commercial zone (*centro*) from the malecón to the city market. There are also various shopping malls throughout Vallarta.

Store Hours 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

4:00 PM-9:00 PM

(some stores are open all day)



BEACHWEAR

Iantzen

☎ 2 27 30

Morelos 601, Center

Popo's

☎ 2 09 25

Díaz Ordaz 752, Center

Tanga

Morelos 620, Center

MODERN CLOTHES

Aca Joe

☎ 3 04 24

Díaz Ordaz 586, Center

África

☎ 2 48 40

Guerrero 135, Center

Blue Jean

☎ 2 17 78

Juárez 419, Center

Bombay

☎ 3 07 23

Morelos 527, Center

LOB

☎ 2 15 15

Morelos 502, Center

Polo

☎ 2 43 19

Aldama 109, Center

Rain

☎ 2 57 18

Juárez 249, Center

COOL CLOTHES

Conjuntos

☎ 2 15 83

Olas Altas 392, South

D'Poali

☎ 2 11 20

Rodríguez 289, Center

Jasmín

Plaza Malecón, Center

M. Guadalajara

☎ 2 23 87

Morelos 550, Center

Nina 7 June

☎ 2 30 99

Hidalgo 227, Center

Otomí

☎ 4 06 42

Las Glorias, North

Sin Nombre

☎ 2 13 20

Díaz Ordaz 768, Center

Sucesos

☎ 2 10 02

Libertad 205, Center

Tienda Adris

☎ 3 13 28

Madero, South

Touch of Class

☎ 3 00 70

Independencia 231, Center

Trébol

☎ 2 49 71

A. Rodríguez, Center

Unicornio

☎ 2 45 66

Morelos 170, Center

Valenciana

☎ 3 04 18

Corona 160, Center

Vogue

☎ 1 05 57

Plaza Marina, Marina

Yolanda

☎ 2 29 93

Juárez 415, Center

JEWELRY

Ole

☎ 3 03 70

Morelos 507, Center

Azul

☎ 3 00 60

Vallarta 228, South

Mar de Plata

☎ 3 14 96

Díaz Ordaz 824, Center

Onyx Factory

☎ 2 24 87

Morelos 434, Center

Oro y Plata

☎ 3 08 45

Díaz Ordaz 512, Center

Rick's Jewelry

☎ 3 01 43

Pueblo Viejo, Center

Bustamante

☎ 3 14 07

Díaz Ordaz 542, South

Suneson

☎ 2 57 15

Morelos 593, Center

POTTERY**Majólica**

☎ 2 45 18

Corona 191, Center

Quetzalcóatl

☎ 3 23 80

Juárez 428, Center

Talavera

☎ 2 41 00

Vallarta 266, South

World of Tiles

☎ 2 26 75

Carranza 374, South

LEATHER**Chaparral**

☎ 2 67 55

Malecón, Center

El Charro

☎ 3 16 11

Juárez 400, Center

Magueyes

☎ 2 69 09

Aldama 114, Center

Rolling Stones

☎ 3 17 69

Díaz Ordaz 802, Center

GLASS**La Rosa Crystal**

☎ 2 56 98

Insurgentes 272, South

San Miguel

☎ 3 23 45

Cárdenas 236, South

FLOWER-SHOP**Florart**

☎ 1 04 23

Neptuno 3-4, Marina

DEPARTMENT-STORES**Woolworth**

☎ 2 00 01

Juárez 880, Center

Lans

☎ 3 28 29

Juárez 867, North

MARKETS**Mercado Pueblo Viejo**

North bridge, Center

Mercado Municipal

North bridge, Center

HANDICRAFTS**Copalli**

art from Mexico

☎ 3 25 07

Corona 186

El Souk

native cultural art

☎ 3 11 08

Morelos 533

Expression Latina

mexican art

☎ 2 26 58

Morelos 525

Le Reja

different artifacts

☎ 2 34 75

Juárez 501-B

Mexican Artesanías

from all of Mexico

☎ 3 09 25

A. Rodríguez 260

Querubines

traditional artifacts

☎ 2 29 88

Juárez 501-A

Xóchitl

handicrafts, art supplies

☎ 2 57 76

Juárez 534

México México

traditional Mexican art

Morelos 570

Casa Maya

patik, hangings

☎ 3 08 92

Morelos 589

Valentinos

paper mache basquets

Juárez 486

Tlaquepaque

varied crafts, good prices

☎ 3 21 21

México 1100

Artes Indias

souvenirs, jewelry

☎ 2 12 43

Insurgentes & Madero

FURNITURE**Arte de México**

wrought iron, wood

☎ 2 06 71

Morelos 676

Billy Moon

unusual designs

☎ 2 19 95

Morelos 558

Tienda Mágica

modern, wrought iron

☎ 3 21 00

Juárez 472 / 947

Casa Mexicana

rustic and accessories

☎ 1 02 32

Marina / Juárez 495

Arte en Fierro

wood, iron

☎ 1 03 23

Marina

Rústika

rustic and colonial

☎ 3 27 21

México 1082

Studio Rustiko

rustic style

☎ 3 28 14

Basilio Badillo 300

Galleria Patryka

Mexican contemporary

☎ 8 01 30

La Jolla de Mismaloya

SOMETHING DIFFERENT**Arte Mágico**

Huichol paintings

☎ 2 30 77

Corona 179

Corsos

leather purses

☎ 2 19 45

Libertad 299

Güeros

handmade men's shirts
 ☎ 2 06 33
 Main Plaza

Kim Caywood

exclusive crafts
 ☎ 3 08 00
 Morelos 582

Ole

hand woven wool rugs
 ☎ 2 24 07
 Juárez 500

Pasos

Guatemalan clothes
 ☎ 2 01 15
 Díaz Ordaz 878

Tienda de María

all types of miniatures
 ☎ 2 21 16
 Juárez 182-A

Puerto Azul

one of a kind
 ☎ 1 10 85
 Marina

Lucy's Cucu Cabana

all animal motif
 ☎ 2 48 39
 Basiño Badillo / Marina

Tabu Artwear

hand painted clothes
 ☎ 2 35 28
 Isla Río Cuale



Night life

Discos & Bars**MALECÓN****Carlos O'Brian's**

lively young crowd
 ☎ 2 14 44
 Díaz Ordaz 786

Hard Rock Cafe

R&B bands
 ☎ 2 55 32
 Díaz Ordaz 652

Kalhua

music, videos, sports events
 ☎ 2 34 76
 Díaz Ordaz

La Pachanga

live Mexican music
 ☎ 3 10 95
 México 918

Planet Hollywood

rock music, food
 ☎ 3 27 10
 Morelos & Galeana

Stars

live jazz and dancing
 ☎ 2 60 61
 Main Plaza

Zoo

great sound system
 ☎ 2 49 45
 Díaz Ordaz 630

HOTEL ZONE**Christines**

disco, light show
 ☎ 4 02 02
 Hotel Krystal

Friday López

video and karoake bar
 ☎ 4 20 10
 Fiesta Americana

J.B. Rock

salsa, popular with locals
 ☎ 4 46 16
 Medina A.

Le Carusel

latin music, local hangout
 ☎ 4 94 40
 Hotel zone

Margaritaville

stage show, older crowd
 ☎ 4 68 68
 Hotel zone

La Iguana

fiesta nights MTWTF only
 ☎ 2 01 05
 Lázaro Cárdenas

Loco Mariachi

live mariachi music,
 open all night
 ☎ 3 22 05
 Lázaro Cárdenas 254

Sundance

video bar
 ☎ 3 36 55
 Lázaro Cárdenas 329

LOS MUERTOS BEACH**Ándale**

lively music, local gathering
 spot
 ☎ 2 10 54
 Olas Altas 425

LA MARINA**Baby Rock**

dance & concert hall, Sun
 Thurs. no cover
 ☎ 1 09 97
 Marina

Collage

bowling, dancing, disco,
 videos
 ☎ 1 18 44
 Airport Rd.

SOUTH OF THE RIVER**Cactus Club**

popular with the young
 crowd
 ☎ 2 60 37
 I. Vallarta 399

Club Roxy

jazz
 ☎ 3 24 04
 I. Vallarta 217

Sixties

music from the 50's and 60's
 ☎ 1 00 04
 Marina

ALTERNATIVE DISCOS**Paco Paco**

alternative lifestyle disco
 and restaurant
 ☎ 2 19 00
 Downtown-South

Xanadu

alternative disco
 Downtown-South

Where to stay

Puerto Vallarta has a wide variety of accommodations, from luxurious to economical (this could be sleeping in a hammock under a *palapa*). The **high season** begins in mid December and lasts until Holy Week (Easter). During this time rates are the highest. Usually package deals and discounted rates are available in the early fall, late spring and summer.

Hotels
 Pool

 Beach

 Restaurant
DOWNTOWN**Buenaventura \$\$**

☎ 2 37 37

  
Cuatro Vientos \$\$
 

☎ 2 01 61

Encino \$

☎ 2 00 51

Hotel Rosita \$
 

☎ 2 10 33

Marlyn \$
 

☎ 2 57 66

Paloma Del Mar \$\$
 

☎ 2 27 90

Suites La Siesta \$\$
 

☎ 2 15 19

HOTEL ZONE**Continental Plaza \$\$\$**
  

☎ 4 01 23

Costa Del Sol \$


☎ 2 20 55

Fiesta Americana \$\$\$
  

☎ 4 20 10

Hacienda Buenaventura \$\$
  

☎ 4 66 67

Holiday Inn \$\$
  

☎ 4 17 00

Krystal Vallarta \$\$\$
  

☎ 4 02 02

Las Palmas \$\$
  

☎ 4 06 50

Moranda Casa Grande \$\$
  

☎ 3 06 66

O'Hare Marlene \$\$
 

☎ 4 12 29

Pelicanos \$\$
  

☎ 4 10 10

Playa De Oro \$\$
  

☎ 4 68 68

Plaza Las Glorias \$\$
  

☎ 4 44 44

Puerto De Luna \$\$
 

☎ 5 04 80

Qualton Club \$\$\$
  

☎ 4 44 46

Buganvillas Sheraton \$\$\$
  

☎ 3 04 04

Villa Del Palmar \$\$
  

☎ 4 06 35

LA MARINA**Bel Air \$\$\$**
 

☎ 1 08 00

Marriott \$\$\$
  

☎ 1 00 04

Plaza Iguana \$\$\$
  

☎ 1 08 80

Paradisus Vallarta \$\$\$
  

☎ 1 02 00

Velas Vallarta \$\$\$
  

☎ 1 00 91

Hotel Zone • Zona Hotelera



Westin Regina \$\$\$

☎ 1 11 00

NUEVO VALLARTA

☎ (329)

Club Oasis Marival \$\$\$

☎ 7 01 00

Diamond Resort \$\$\$

☎ 7 04 00

Hotel Royal De Cameron**Costa Flamingos \$\$**

☎ 8 02 26

Paradise Village \$\$\$

☎ 7 07 70

Sierra \$\$\$

☎ 7 13 00

SOUTH OF THE RIVER**Estancia San Carlos \$**

☎ 2 53 27

Marelena \$\$

☎ 4 44 25

Molino De Agua \$\$

☎ 2 19 07

Posada De Roger \$

☎ 2 08 36

Posada Don Miguel \$

☎ 2 45 40

Posada Río Cuale \$

☎ 2 04 50

LOS MUERTOS**Hotel Alegre \$\$**

☎ 2 47 93

Hotel Arcos \$\$

☎ 2 07 12

Playa Los Arcos \$\$

☎ 2 15 83

Puerto Vallarta Beach \$\$

☎ 2 50 40

San Marino Plaza \$\$

☎ 2 15 55

Torre De Oro \$

☎ 2 44 88

Tropicana \$

☎ 2 08 29

SOUTH OF TOWN**Camino Real \$\$\$**

☎ 1 50 00

Costa Vida \$\$

☎ 1 50 20

Lindo Mar Resort \$\$

☎ 1 55 74

Conchas Chinas \$\$

☎ 1 57 70

FURTHER SOUTH**Blue Bay \$\$\$**

☎ 1 55 00

La Jolla De Mismaloya \$\$\$

☎ 8 06 60

Presidente**Intercontinental \$\$\$**

☎ 8 01 91

What to do

Whatever you like to do or see is available in this paradise. You can use conducted group tours, private tours, or venture on your own. Your hotel, travel agency or tour rep can make your reservations and give you all the latest and specific details you'll need.

AIR ADVENTURES**Aero Taxis**

Bay, Talpa, Mascota,
San Sebastián, photo shoots

Hot Air Balloons

flying over the bay

BOATING & CRUISES**Allegre**

dinner cruises

Bora Bora Cruise

booze cruise, equipment included
Discovery

new boat, open bar

Kon Tiki

snorkel breakfast & lunch, beach
activities

Luna de Miel

open bar snorkeling breakfast,
lunch

Maggie II

private excursions, open bar, lunch, snacks

Marigalante

15th century Spanish galleon

Neptuno Charters

all inclusive package, ask for Duncan

Princesa Cruise

5 different trips daily

Surrender

luxury small yacht, 20 people

Tropical Sail

luxury sailing boat

BIKING

Bike Mex

beginners to advanced, all gear included

Lobo

go karts -located behind Plaza Caracol

Moto Rent

motor bikes, rent for the day

Motos Vejar

rent for the day

Sun Bike

daily trips, mountains, along Rio Cuale, English guides

HORSES

Equestrian Club

lessons and tours

Hidden Trails

experienced riders only, small groups

Ranch 4 Milpas

working ranch, jungles, beer drinking bull

Rancho Amigo

personalized tours, small-groups

Rancho Charro

all levels, English & western saddles

Rancho La Morena

horseback riding through the mountains

Rancho Ojo de Agua

horseback riding, mountains & river

Rancho White Horse

tropical tour and Playa Grande

Sierra Madre

breathtaking scenery of foothills

DIVING

Chicos Dive Shop

custom tours, certification, photography

Padi Dive Center

great diving, lots of variety

Vallarta Adventure

Marieta Islands diving

TOUR ADVENTURES

Bungee Jumping

freefall 120 ft., diploma issued with fall

Open Air Expeditions

small groups, ecotourism, excellent guides, very personal

Ecogrupos de México

grand variety of ecotourism tours

Terra Noble

ancient Prehispanic art forms

Xplora

Yelapa night plus 60 other different things to do

Vallarta Adventure

well worth it, all size groups, great equipment & variety to choose from

GOLF

Flamingos Golf Club

18 hole course, 15 miles north of airport, rentals
 @ (329) 8 02 80

Marina Vallarta

private 18 hole course, packages available through some hotels
 @ 1 00 73

Vallarta Minigolf

10 000 sq. ft. 18 hole, good fun

TENNIS

Continental Plaza

hard and clay courts, rentals, lessons, pro shop
 @ 4 01 23

Iguana Tennis Club

3 covered courts, lessons, pool, good food
 @ 1 06 83

EXCURSIONS & TRIPS

American Express

@ 3 29 28

Best tours

@ 4 85 70

Betanzos

@ 3 23 68

Big Al tours

@ 4 01 02

Consejeros de viajes

@ 4 01 23

Expo viajes

@ 4 02 35

Intermar

@ 1 07 34

Marely travel

@ 1 02 26

México mío

@ 2 23 32

Miller travel

@ 4 11 97

Tukari

@ 4 71 78

Viva tours

@ 4 04 10

SPAS & GYMS

Americas Gym

daily, weekly, and monthly rates. All equipment
 @ 4 47 04

Olympia Gym

monthly rate, no membership charge. All equipment
 @ 3 20 08

Puesta del Sol Spa

daily, weekly, monthly,
yearly rate
☎ 1 07 70

Spa Qualton

all day, half day, selective
packages
☎ 4 44 46

VARIED**Bullfights**

Mexican show, contact
travel agent for tickets

Private home tours

4 homes, \$20 donation, all
money to charity

Artists Tour

☎ 2 19 82
Half day tour of studios \$17
USD in advance, \$20.

Practical information

Where is it? Puerto Vallarta borders the Pacific ocean on the west coast of the state of Jalisco, in the Bay of Banderas. It is as the same parallel as the Hawaiian Islands -105° longitude west, 20° latitude north.

WHAT IS THE CLIMATE?

In the winter (December-May), the nights are cool and fresh, but during the day the temperature is 26°-28° centigrade (78°-82° F). The sun is warm and bright -great for tanning. The water is cooler during the winter; too cool for most Mexicans, but the tourists don't seem to mind, and they find it very enjoyable. Summers are sunny and tropical with some humidity. The rainy season is from July through September and the humidity can reach 100%. After a short rain the sun always returns.

Population

approximately 300 000.

DISTANCES BY ROAD

From Puerto Vallarta to:

Tepic: 169 km

Guadalajara: 356 km

Mexico D.F.: 902 km

Mazatlán: 463 km

Manzanillo: 319 km

WHAT TO TIP?

Restaurants: 15-20%

Bars: 15-20%

Beauty shops: 10-15%

Barbers: 10-15%

Manicure: 10-15%

Pedicure: 10-15%

Bellboys: \$1-3 USD

Sky caps: \$1 USD per bag

Hotel maids: \$1-2 USD
per day

HOW IS THE WATER?

For the last three years, Seapal, the local water supplier to Puerto Vallarta has received the highest certification from the Dept. of Health. While the water is pure and safe, not all eating places have replaced old pipes, so caution is still advised.

WHAT ABOUT CRIME?

Puerto Vallarta is a tourist town, so crime is lower than in other parts of Mexico. The tourist police are here to assist the visitors.

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

Because Puerto Vallarta is a tourist town, there are many offices and stores that do not close, but government offices and

banks do close on official holidays.

January 1: New Years Day*

January 6: Three Kings Day

February 5: Constitution Day

February 24: Flag Day

March 21: Benito Juárez Birthday

March-April: Holy Week (Variable)

May 1: Labor Day*

May 5: Battle of Puebla*

May 10: Mothers Day

September 1: State of Union Speech

September 16: Independence Day*

October 12: Columbus Day*

November 20: Revolution Day*

December 25: Christmas*

*Official holidays.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January

6: Three Kings day (gifts for children)

16: 16 Kilometer Walk

February

Fishing Tournament
Regatta from Marina del Rey (every 2 years)

March

Tennis Championship

April

Jazz festival

May / June

May and June are full of fiestas: charro parades, fairs, circuses, handicraft sales

July

National Sailfish Tournament

September

15: Independence (Midnight celebration)

16: Independence Day Parade

29: Parade to honor Archangel Michael in Pitillal

November

2: Day of the dead celebration

20: Revolution parade
Fiesta del Mar: Gastronomic Festival-National Tennis Tournament-Art Festival-Circuit Beach Volley Ball, Regatta Class Capri 37, Amateur Golf Tournament-International Boat Show and International Sailfish Tournament.

December

1-12: daily processions in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, parades, religious songs, native dances, and offerings. This is Vallarta's biggest festival.

WHAT IS MEXICAN COURTESY?

The Mexican people are almost unable to utter the word "no". They consider it discourteous. They prefer to give some answer to a request for information (even if they don't know). This is not done to intentionally mislead, it is just the Mexican's idea of courtesy.

How to get the right answer?

When you need information of any kind be sure you are specific and precise as possible. Do not think that you will get more

information than you ask for; you won't. An example; a friend of mine went to get a drivers license. She went to window #2 and asked, "Where do I pay the fees for a license?" She was politely told "window #5". After arriving at window #5 and having everything taken care of the woman said, "Do you have the form?" She replied, "No, where do I get that?" "Window #2", she was told. So it is necessary to have a plan of action if you are going to get anything done. Where do you go? Where do you pay? Cash, check? Do you take dollars? Your day will be less frustrating and you will accomplish more if you plan ahead and ask the right questions.

BOOKS FOR SALE

The Magic of Puerto Vallarta

by Marilú Suárez-Murias
both Spanish and English
texts and photographs.

Puerto Vallarta The Hidden Paradise

by Carlos Munguia Fregoso,
Spanish and English.

Tales of Retirement

by Polly Vicars, English.

Betrayal in Mexico

by Theresa Lewis and Louis E. Bittrich English.

Puerto Vallarta Squeeze

by Robert James Waller
novel by the author of the
Bridges of Madison.

Buying the Ranch

by Virtue Hathaway.

All of these books can be bought at most of the hotels, art galleries and Señor Book.

USEFUL TELEPHONES

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Air Care

☎ 01 800 3 61 16

Red Cross (Ambulance service)

☎ 2 15 33

Intensive Care Ambulance

☎ 5 03 86

Police Emergency

☎ 060

Local Police

☎ 2 01 23

Federal Police

☎ 1 10 65

HOSPITALS

Ameri-Med

Membership Group
☎ 1 00 23 & 1 00 24
Plaza Neptuno

CMQ

☎ 3 19 19
Basilio Badillo

Medasist

☎ 3 04 44
M. Diéguez 360

Servicio Médico de la Bahía

☎ 2 26 27
Francisco Medina 500

Regional

☎ 4 40 00
Libramiento

Red Cross

☎ 2 15 33
Río de la Plata

Santa Teresa

☎ 2 69 67
Francisco Villa 421

PHARMACIES

CMQ (24 hrs.)

☎ 2 35 72
Basilio Badillo 365

Lux

☎ 2 19 09
Insurgentes 51

Vallarta

☎ 2 00 04
Juárez 547

Guadalajara

☎ 4 18 90
Insurgentes

Express

☎ 1 22 23
Plaza Neptuno

GENERAL INFORMATION**TOURIST OFFICES****Tourist Information**

☎ 2 02 42

Main Plaza

Tourist Office

☎ 2 02 43

F. Medina Ascencio 1712

Toll free number

☎ 01 800 3 63 22

email:jalisco.gob.mx/turismo

CONSULATES**American**

☎ 2 00 69

Main Plaza

Canadian

☎ 2 53 98

Main Plaza

England

☎ 01 (3) 376 16 27

Guadalajara

Germany

☎ 01 (3) 613 96 23

Guadalajara

IMMIGRATION**Immigration Office****Airport**

☎ 1 13 80

Main Immigration Office

☎ 4 76 53

Marina dock

AA

☎ 2 55 88

24 hours

Neurotics Anonymous

☎ 4 29 53

24 hours

CONSUMER PROTECTION**Profeco**

☎ 2 25 54

COMMUNICATIONS**Telegraph Office**

☎ 2 31 55

L.D. México Direct Dial

☎ 01 + area + number

L.D. U.S. Direct Dial

☎ 001 + area + number

L.D. Operator National

☎ 020

L.D. Operator Intern'l

☎ 090

Post Office

☎ 2 18 88

Juárez 628

NEWSPAPERS**Vallarta Opina**

☎ 4 28 29

Mérida 118

Tribuna de la Bahía

☎ 2 43 61

Basilio Badillo

Mercurio

☎ 4 51 25

Las Aralias

Ocho Columnas

☎ 2 25 74

Hidalgo 227

Meridiano

☎ 3 29 75

Morelos 800

El Sol

☎ 4 87 33

Venecia 288

ENGLISH PUBLICATIONS**Vallarta Today**

☎ 4 28 29

Mérida 118

Vallarta Reporter

☎ 2 39 06

Playa Los Muertos

Magazine P.V. Lifestyles

☎ 1 04 64

La Marina

Yellow Pages

☎ 1 07 43

La Marina

BANKS**Banoro**

☎ 3 04 81

Olas Altas 246

Banamex

☎ 2 53 77

Zaragoza 176

Banca Confía

☎ 2 44 64

Morelos & Libertad

Banca Cremi

☎ 4 54 54

Villa Vallarta

Banca Promex

☎ 2 12 19

Malecón 1A

Banca Serfin

☎ 2 07 37

Morelos corner Encino

Banco Internacional

☎ 2 00 07

Miramar corner Libertad

Banco Nacional

☎ 3 15 50

Juárez 291

Bancomer

☎ 2 50 50

Juárez & Mina

Banpaís

☎ 2 37 24

Díaz Ordaz 688

Inverlat

☎ 2 24 45

Juárez 403

Lloyds

☎ 4 16 89

Plaza Santa María

Carr. Airport

Banking Hours Vary

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Dollar Exchange

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

CREDIT CARDS**American Express**

☎ 3 29 55 & 3 29 59

Morelos 660

Diners Club

☎ 2 47 99

☎ 01 800 0 02 54

Juárez 159

Master Card Visa (Carnet)

☎ 3 16 58 & 3 16 59

Visa (Banamex)

☎ 01 800 7 06 66

Zaragoza 180,

Main Square

CHURCHES**Catholic: Parroquia****Guadalupe**

☎ 2 13 26

Hidalgo 370

Catholic: Santa Cruz

☎ 2 09 89

Aguacate 233

Evangelical: Antioch Christian

☎ 4 24 64
Berlin 52

Non Denominational: First Baptist

☎ 2 18 79
Morelos & Argentina

REAL ESTATE OFFICES

Applegate

☎ 2 04 46
Conchas Chinas Market

Brock Squire y Asociados

☎ 3 00 55
Mismaloya road, by Pemex

PV Realty

☎ 2 42 88
Libertad 273

Remax

☎ 1 05 40
La Marina

TRANSPORTATION

AIRLINES

Aero California

☎ 4 14 99
Airport

Aeroméxico

☎ 4 27 77
Airport

Alaska

☎ 1 12 52
Airport

American

☎ 1 17 99
Airport

Canadian

☎ 1 12 12
Airport

Continental

☎ 1 10 25
Airport

Delta

☎ 1 17 34
Airport

Mexicana

☎ 1 12 66
Airport

CAR RENTALS

Advantage

☎ 1 18 09 & 1 14 99
Francisco Medina 7936

Alba

☎ 2 29 59
Aguiles Serdán 194

Avis

☎ 1 11 12 & 1 16 57
Airport

Budget

☎ 1 18 88
Airport
☎ 2 29 80 & 2 67 66
Palmas 1680

Dollar

☎ 3 13 54 & 2 17 27
Airport

Hertz

☎ 1 14 73 & 1 13 99
Airport
☎ 2 00 24 P. de las Palmas
☎ 7 13 00 Hotel Radison

National

☎ 1 12 26 Airport
☎ 2 05 15 Downtown

Payless

☎ 1 14 99
Airport

Royal

☎ 4 78 83
Hotel Hacienda
Buenaventura

Thrifty

(free pickup)
☎ 4 92 80
Francisco Medina, km 5.5

Caution: When renting an automobile make sure that the seat belts are working, check the brakes and the condition of the car. The driving laws in Mexico are more flexible than other countries. Be sure that you read your contract. The conditions regarding accident or theft usually result in your payment of the deductible. That can be more than \$200 usd. Many of the companies have a low liability coverage.

CITY

TRANSPORTATION

Taxis. They are all over town, most (not all) are honest, you should always ask at the front desk of your hotel for the rate to the place you are going. Also, you should ask the price to

the driver to avoid confusion. It isn't necessary to give tips to the driver, but it is up to you.

Buses. Local buses run from 6:00 AM until 11:00 PM. There are only three main streets in Puerto Vallarta. One northbound and two southbound. Most of the buslines make a complete loop around the city from the airport through the downtown area along the *malecón* across the river through the restaurant district and back again. Northbound buses are marked **Hoteles, Aeropuerto, Ixtapa, Pitillal**. These buses will take you just about anywhere you need to be. They are frequent and inexpensive. Only one line is marked Marina. The southbound buses run from 6:00 AM until 9:30 PM. These buses are marked **Mismaloya, or Boca de Tomatlán**. It's a beautiful route as it travels down the southern coastal highway.

OUT OF TOWN BUSES

Del Pacífico

☎ 2 56 22
Insurgentes 282

Elite & Tres Estrellas de Oro

☎ 3 11 17
Insurgentes

Estrella Blanca

☎ 2 06 13
Insurgentes 180

ETN

☎ 2 66 66
Lázaro Cárdenas

Norte de Sonora

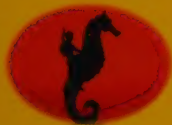
☎ 2 16 50
Madero 343

Primera Plus

☎ 3 11 17
Lázaro Cárdenas


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Color maps to help you get around

- ***Downtown (north)*** - Front flap
- ***Downtown (south)*** - Front flap
- ***Beaches*** - Back flap
- ***Nuevo Vallarta*** - Page 31
- ***Marina Vallarta*** - Page 34
- ***Hotels*** - Page 65

POOL 

BEACH 

RESTAURANT 

SEE PAGE 

Discover and learn about:

- *where the most popular and secluded beaches are*
- *the best sights to visit*
- *exciting and different tours for everyone*
- *special side trips*
- *the night life*
- *where to eat and shop*
- *where to find sports, fun and adventure*
- *hotels, restaurants, shops, services and other practical details*
- *the art scene*
- *how to get around*
- *local history and tradition*

Discover PUERTO VALLARTA

is a practical and easy guide to use and is full of colorful photos.

Written in a simple and concise manner packed with useful information and insight

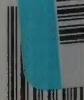
It will be your constant companion whether this is your first trip or you are a frequent traveler.



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